



VAYEITZEI - AND HE DEPARTED

Genesis 28:10 to 32:3

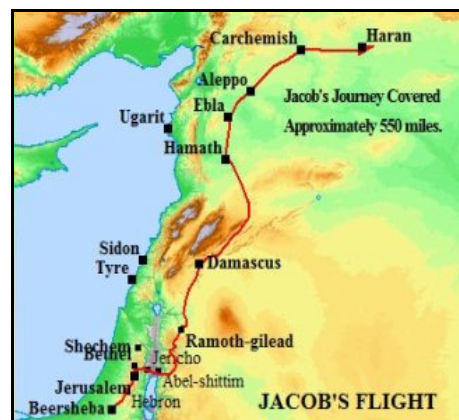
Hosea 11:7 to 12:12

John 1:43-51

Jacob's Life: Part Two

This Place

The last study closed with Jacob having to leave his family to avoid his brother Esau's wrath. While Jacob journeyed from Beersheba to his relatives located east in Haran, he reached a *certain place* and stopped for the evening.



Looking back, we see that Abraham, Jacob's grandfather, was also asked to stop at a *certain place*.

“Then He said [to Abraham], ‘Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.’ Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw *the place* afar off. So the two of them went together. Then they came to *the place* of which God/Elohim had told him” (Genesis 22:2, 4, 8-9).

Jewish tradition, based on Genesis 22, states that *the place* Jacob came to was in the mountains of Moriah, the same place where his grandfather Abraham offered Isaac, Jacob's father. In effect, we now have a picture of all three patriarchs coming to this same altar.

Scripture records,

“So he [*Jacob*] came to a *certain place* and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of *that place* and put it at his head, and he lay down in *that place* to sleep” (Genesis 28:11).

Would you be able to sleep with your head on a cold hard stone? Genesis 28:11 reveals that Jacob took his life and placed it on *the stone*, which could also represent an altar. Jacob lay down or surrendered his life, and placed it as an offering. The altar was *The Rock* - Yeshua.

Yeshua said to Peter, “And on this *rock [the Gospel of Yeshua]* I will build My church/*ekklesia*, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

It is here, in *this place* that a believer comes to surrender his or her life to receive Yeshua's *indwelling* life.

This altar is:

- *The place* of intimacy.
- *The place* of betrothal.
- *The place* where we enter into Yeshua's rest.

Jacob will go on to become the father of twelve sons. Together they are known as the twelve tribes of Jacob or *Israel*. Those who are in Yeshua are called *Israel*, as they are also of the seed of Abraham. The Covenant of Abraham was passed on to his son Isaac, his grandson Jacob, and from Jacob to his twelve sons. All three patriarchs laid their lives down at this altar, *the same altar that Yeshua lay down His life as an offering*. When we are obedient to the Gospel, we too will offer our lives in agreement to the Covenant in Him. Thus we are also called *living sacrifices* or *living stones*. The patriarchs believed and obeyed the Covenant promises. Through Yeshua, we are given this same inheritance, access, and right of return to the land as the patriarchs. We are God's/*Elohim* inheritance - *the inheritance of Jacob* (Psalm 33:12; Deuteronomy 32:9; Jeremiah 10:16; Isaiah 58:13-14; Galatians 3:7, 9).

📖 **Luke 1:33** “And He [*Yeshua*] will reign over the house of Jacob [*Israel*] forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

📖 **Romans 12:1-2** “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God/*Elohim*, that you present your bodies *a living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable to God/*Elohim*, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God/*Elohim*.”

🌿 **1 Peter 2:1-10** “Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a *living stone*, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God/*Elohim* and precious, you also, as *living stones*, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God/*Elohim* through Jesus Christ/*Yeshua*. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a **chief cornerstone**, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.’ Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, ‘**The stone** which the builders rejected has become the **chief cornerstone**,’ and ‘**a stone** of stumbling and **a rock** of offense.’ **They stumble, being disobedient to the word [the Gospel], to which they also were appointed.** But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God/*Elohim*, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”

The Dream

As Jacob lay his life down, he was given a vision of divine purpose. Jacob saw a ladder resting on the earth reaching heavenward with God’s/*Elohim* messengers ascending and descending. For anyone who truly gives up his or her life they too will see what Jacob saw. Releasing all bitterness, deceit, and strife, in the way Jacob did will open the window of heaven (Genesis 28:10-12; John 1:51).

It is encouraging for God’s/*Elohim* people to know that by their honoring to walk in this same Gospel and Covenant as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob based their lives on; that we too are included in this same inheritance. We saw that the patriarchs went through many tests and trials, but it was not until they came to *The Rock* that they saw the actual Kingdom in *Yeshua*. Even though God/*Elohim* speaks of this life continually throughout Scripture, it is not until His people come to the altar that they can understand and desire to enter in. Seeing these truths, the patriarchs were able to move past existing in a common world (*olam hazeh*), and purpose toward the evident Kingdom that is not of this world. They walked in the Gospel as a *reality* more than what was physically tangible around them. So sure were they in the Gospel that they were willing to place their lives on the altar and *die* for what they believed. In their death to self, they were resurrected to a new lifestyle in *Yeshua*’s Sovereignty, the *olam haba*, under the direction of the Spirit of the Holy One.

As Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob walked in the Gospel before us, as forerunners, that same realm at the altar is presented to all who believe. Because of what *Yeshua* accomplished on the tree/cross, believers can now meet with Him face to face at the Rock/altar (*the olam haba*). Without the Gospel, there is no altar experience and little if any life in Him. It is this Rock of offering (*Yeshua*) we are to build our lives on. There is no other. *Yeshua*’s Word is our very foundation.

🌿 **Isaiah 28:16** “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD/*Yahweh Elohim*: ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a stone [the Gospel - *Yeshua*] for a *foundation*, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily” (1 Peter 2:6-8).

🌿 **1 John 5:6-8** “This is He who came by water and blood - Jesus Christ/*Yeshua HaMashiach*; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit/*Ruach* who bears witness, because the Spirit/*Ruach* is truth. For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh*; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit/*Ruach*, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.” (KJV/NKJ).

🌿 **Isaiah 44:8** “Do not fear, nor be afraid; have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God/*Elohim* besides Me? Indeed there is no other *Rock*; I know not one.”

When we truly accept the fullness of the Gospel in our hearts, we will become more and more comfortable meeting with Yeshua at the altar. It is here His people receive real peace and joy in their hearts. In *this place*, there is no longer strife or a life of turmoil trying to make sense of situations out of their control. There is only a knowing that their lives and the lives of others are now under the watchful care of Yeshua. Under Covenant terms, God/*Elohim* must fulfill His side of the promise and care for our *food* and *clothing* - our *very sustenance* just as He did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Our job is to *believe* as they believed. That is what brings *His peace* and *His rest* into our hearts.

🌿 **1 Corinthians 3:10-17** “According to the grace [*Gospel*] of God/*Elohim* which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ/*Yeshua Ha Mashiach*. Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, [*the principles of the Kingdom or*] wood, hay, straw [*personal preference*], each one’s work will become clear; for *the Day* will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. If anyone’s work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. Do you not know that you are the temple of God/*Elohim* and that the Spirit of God/*Elohim* dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God/*Elohim*, God/*Elohim* will destroy him. For the temple of God/*Elohim* is holy, which temple you are.”

🌿 **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*.”

The Ladder

With heaven opened before Jacob, he saw God/*Elohim* *standing* above this spiritual ladder. From there God/*Elohim* *spoke* to Jacob saying,

“I am the LORD/*Yahweh* the God/*Elohim* of Abraham your father and the God/*Elohim* 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” (Genesis 28:13-15).

When Jacob awoke, he said,

“Surely the LORD/*Yahweh* is in *this place*, and I did not know it. How awesome is *this place!* This is none other than the house of God/*Elohim*, and this is the gate of heaven!” (Genesis 28:16).

The Hebrew word for ladder Strong’s H5551 *cullam* סֹלָם from the root H5549 *calal* סָלַל meaning *to cause to return, to cast up, to return to the upright way* (to the highway of holiness). *Calal* is very close to the Hebrew word for bride Strong’s H3618 *kallah* כַּלָּה from the root word H3639 *kalal* כָּלַל meaning *to complete, perfect, make complete, make perfect*. The place Jacob came to was the place of betrothal. When God’s/*Elohim* people lay their lives down as an offering and enter into Covenant with Him, they also surrender their self-rights, self-will, and self-ownership to enter into His life just like Jacob. Presently a bride at her marriage yields up her maiden name for her husband’s (representing his lifestyle, character, and strength). All that he is and all that he owns is now opened before his bride. In the picture of the ladder, Jacob saw heaven open before him, and all of Yeshua’s Sovereignty, from the beginning /*Beresheet/Aleph* to the end/*Revelation/Tov* revealed. He also saw and acknowledged the walk – the highway of holiness. That view of God’s/*Elohim* Kingdom was not only given to Jacob as an eternal inheritance but given also to all of his future generations - the Israelites - and to those who sojourn with the God/*Elohim* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Seeing the ladder with the messengers gave Jacob a rare glimpse into the heart of God/*Elohim*.

“And behold, the LORD/*Yahweh* stood above it and said: ‘I am the LORD God/*Yahweh Elohim* of Abraham your father and the God/*Elohim* 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.’” (Genesis 28:13-14)

God/*Elohim* also added:

“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” (Genesis 28:15).

With Jacob having been through so much, this impartation was the affirmation that gave him courage for what lay ahead. It was evident to him that indeed he was heir to the Covenant of his grandfather Abraham and that he also carried the firstborn blessing. He acknowledged with all his heart his love for God/*Elohim*. For now, he knew that the keys of heaven had successfully been passed on to God’s/*Elohim* choice for firstborn: *Jacob*.

📖 **Genesis 28:16-17** “Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, ‘Surely the LORD / *Yahweh* is in this place, and I did not know *it*.’ And he was afraid and said, ‘How awesome *is* this place! This *is* none other than the house of God/*Elohim*, and this *is* the gate of heaven!’”

This place, the gate of Heaven, Jacob named,

“And he called the name of that place *Beth- El* [*the House of God/Elohim*]; but the name of that city had been Luz previously” (Genesis 28:19).

The Stone – The Gospel of Yeshua

The Hebrew word for stone is Strong’s H68 *eben* אֶבֶן, which means *precious stone* and comes from the root word Strong’s H1129 *banah* בָּנָה *to build, rebuild, establish, cause to continue, establish a family, established of restored exiles.*

In Scripture,

- *Stone* is the title for God/*Elohim* (Genesis 49:24).
- *Stone* is also the title of the Messiah (Isaiah 28:16).
- *Stone* equates to *rock* and is also a title for Yeshua; He is the Rock that gives Life (1 Corinthians 10:4).
- *Stone* is a reference to the Scripture, the Word – the Gospel of Yeshua (Colossians 1:23).
- As the children of Israel were taken out of Egypt and led into the wilderness, the *Stone* provided “living water.”
- The Word of God/*Elohim* was written on *stone* tablets. The Messiah is the carrier and embodiment of this Word.
- God’s/*Elohim* Word is the foundation we are to build our lives on.
- This *Stone* (Messiah, the carrier of God’s/*Elohim* Word/the Torah) the builders (called shepherds, pastors, teachers, and rabbis) rejected.
- It was this rejected person Yeshua, the embodiment of the Word that became the *precious capstone* or *cornerstone*.
- The *Stone* or Word (Yeshua) that causes men to stumble and fall because the Word /Yeshua reveals the condition of men’s hearts and rebellious ways (Genesis 49:24; Isaiah 28:16; 1 Corinthians 10:4; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2: 6-8).
- The *Stone* is the Gospel.

📖 **2 John 1:6** “This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning [*Beresheet –Genesis 1:1*], you should walk in it [*meaning the Gospel*]” (Colossians 1: 21-23, Galatians 3:8).

📖 **1 Peter 2: 6-8** “Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, ‘Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.’ Therefore, to you who believe, *He is* precious; but to those who are disobedient, ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,’ and ‘A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.’ They stumble, being disobedient to the word [*the Gospel*], to which they also were appointed” (Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9:33; 1 Corinthians 3:11; Isaiah 8:14; Ephesians 2:20; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; 2 Timothy 2:19).

📖 **Matthew 16:18-19** “Jesus/Yeshua answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah [*Peter*], for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on **this rock** [*Yeshua*] I will build

My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you *the keys of the kingdom of heaven [the Gospel]*, and whatever you bind on earth [*olam hazeh*] will be bound in heaven [*olam haba*], and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

📖 **Revelation 2:17** “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives *it*.”

The Keys To The Kingdom Of Heaven

When mankind receives the Gospel, Yeshua’s life in man blesses him with heavenly discernment and understanding in the realms of His Kingdom. The Gospel or His Word contains 613 commandments. These are the Kingdom’s fundamental principles to live by, of which 271 pertain to Israel living outside the land. These are the instructions that build God’s/*Elohim* Kingdom in the heart of man on the earth. The requirement for those living and serving in His Kingdom is that they come to know these realms and observe them in their hearts. This walk then becomes the walk of holiness and righteousness.

📖 **James 1:22-25** “But [*believers*] be doers of the word [*the Gospel*], and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone [*believer*] is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he [*believer*] who looks into *the perfect law of liberty* and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one [*believer*] will be blessed in what he does.”

The keys of Yeshua’s heavenly Kingdom on earth are to choose life, to walk in clean and holy ways according to His Word, and to keep His Sabbaths, Feast days/*moedim*, and New Moon/*Rosh Chodesh* celebrations (Ezekiel 44:23-24).

When His people walk in Covenant, meeting with Yeshua at the altar of offering /*The Place*, the adversary must declare himself. Yeshua is our advocate and our defense. Thus the altar of the offering is both *the place of death* (where the enemy is defeated) and *the place of resurrection*. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob all defeated their adversaries at *the Rock* – and resurrected as mighty men of God.

📖 **Genesis 22:17** “In the giving of the covenant to Abraham, the LORD/*Yahweh* declared ‘blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall *possess the gate of their enemies*.’”

A *firstborn* is a believer who has circumcised his or her heart and is walking in God’s/*Elohim* teaching and instruction. It is these believers who have their lives redeemed anew. No enemy or accuser of the brethren will be able to stand when a believer walks in the righteous ways of the Gospel, *as the redeemed literally hold the keys to the kingdom of heaven*.

Binding And Loosing

A child of God/*Elohim*, one who walks in obedience to the teaching and instruction of God's/*Elohim* Kingdom, the Gospel, is in Hebrew understanding considered to be walking *in Torah*, as they are one in the same. According to Scripture, if His people honor His Word [*olam haba*], their obedience will *bind* and *forbid* the enemy from having authority in their life. If a believer misses the mark by walking outside the realms of God's/*Elohim* Kingdom (i.e. carry bitterness, resentment, envy, or accusation, etc. [*olam hazeh*] in their heart), that carnal behavior will open the door and *loose* the enemy giving Satan legal right to come toward them. Repentance, to restore one's life back into obedience to God's/*Elohim* Word, will close the door and bind the enemy. Their life once more will be restored to the blessings (Job 1:8; 2:3; Zechariah 3:1-2).

In Matthew 16:18-19, Yeshua appointed Peter overseer of the keys of the Gospel to His Heavenly Kingdom on earth. Peter was commissioned to teach what each key represented, what they unlocked, what they are used for, and why they are essential for a believer to observe (John 21:15-17).

📖 **Matthew 16:18-19** “And I [*Yeshua*] also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock [*the Gospel*] I will build My church/*ekklesia*, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

The *rock* Yeshua was speaking of when He said, “*on this rock, I will build my ekklesia*” (assembly), was not about Peter per se, but about all those who seek Yeshua's Kingdom on earth. It is to these people, who will build their lives on *The Rock* that the keys to His Kingdom are given. Yeshua's Word is *The Rock* His people are to build on. The patriarch's lives are our model. Yeshua has given His people (believers) *all* the keys, *all* the tools, and *all* the building plans they will ever need. These are written about in His Torah (*Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy*) and are confirmed by the prophets and the New Testament/*Brit Chadasha*. His people just have to learn what they are and how to use them (Ezekiel 43:10-12; Matthew 6:33; Matthew 7:24-27; Acts 15:1- 31; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17).

📖 **Isaiah 51:1-2** “Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, you who seek the LORD/*Yahweh*: look to the rock *from which* you were hewn, and to the hole of the pit *from which* you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah *who* bore you; for I called him alone, and blessed him and increased him.”

The Tree Of Life Or The Tree Of Knowledge Of Good And Evil

What is the difference between the two trees: *the Tree of Life* versus *the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*? One brings life, and the other brings death. One is life in the Spirit of God/*Elohim* in the Heavenly nature (*olam haba*), and the other is a life lived in the carnal world open to sin and death (*olam hazeh*). Both are with us in life, as they were with Adam and Eve in

the midst of the Garden. God/*Elohim* has a purpose in them in that His people must choose each day, which they will serve: *life or death*.

If a believer in Yeshua is still mixing sin in his or her life (such as immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy or slanderous talk, etc.), these characteristics reveal an immaturity that is opposed to God's/*Elohim* Kingdom. Walking in these contrasting issues will bring dishonor to His Name.

🌿 **Hebrews 5:12-14** “For though by this time you [*believers*] ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God/*Elohim* [*Mosaic Covenant*]; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in *the word of righteousness*, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses *exercised to discern both good and evil*.”

Discord in a believer shows reluctance in surrendering his or her life in that they have yet to believe and put their trust in Yeshua's Word and His Covenant for their lives. Carnal traits belong to the *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*. For a believer to continue to act in an unredeemed lifestyle shows disrespect and a double-mindedness that serves two masters. To truly *believe* is to surrender the rule of sin and death, and allow Yeshua to circumcise the heart giving Him exclusive sovereignty over it. Freedom can only come when each person takes responsibility for his or her iniquity. Redemption will only come by repenting at the altar and allowing the Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh* to circumcise the heart (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Peter 2:1).

🌿 **Hebrews 6:1-6** “Therefore [*believer*], leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ/*Messiah*, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God/*Elohim*, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God/*Elohim* permits. For *it is* impossible for those [*believers*] 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/*Elohim* and the powers of the age to come, if *they* fall away, to renew *them* again to repentance, since *they* crucify again for themselves the Son of God/*Elohim*, and put *Him* to an open shame.”

Christians have stumbled over the *written* Torah while Jews have stumbled over the *Living* Torah. God's/*Elohim* people are coming to know *Who* Torah is, and as they do, they become *one new man* in Him (Yeshua), as the prophets have declared. His people are to put on that which brings life (*The Tree of Life*). When they offer their life as a living sacrifice, the fruit of the Spirit will be their witness. The characteristics of His witness within a believer are “*love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things, there is no law [and no lawlessness]. And those who are Messiah's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires [that war inside against our spirits]. If we live in the Spirit [of God/ Elohim], let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.*” By this fruit, God's/*Elohim* people (and others) will identify the surrendered life (Galatians 5:22-26).

✠ **Ephesians 2:13-20** “But now in Christ Jesus/*Yeshua HaMashiach* you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ/*Messiah*. 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, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God/*Elohim* 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 God/*Elohim*, *having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ/Yeshua, Messiah Himself being the chief cornerstone.*”

The Mediator

As mentioned earlier, Yeshua is the ladder between heaven and earth. The ladder to heaven that Jacob saw had one end planted (established) on earth, with its top or head reaching to heaven. That is the picture of the Messiah, the flesh of God/*Elohim*, as Yeshua himself declared to His disciples,

“Verily, verily, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the messengers of God/*Elohim* ascending and descending upon the Son of Man” (John 1:51).

The *ladder* between heaven and earth is the body of Messiah, a picture of holiness and His sacrifice on our behalf. At His crucifixion He was suspended between heaven and earth – thus He is our mediator (John 1:1,14; 43-51; Galatians 3:13).

✠ **1 Timothy 2:5** “For *there is one God/Elohim and one Mediator between God/Elohim and men, the Man Christ Jesus/Yeshua HaMashiach.*”

The ladder also represents the *Tree of Life*. As the *Tree of Life*, Yeshua is the head of the assembly of believers. He is also the Root of the Tree. The Jewish sages say that Jacob’s ladder is Torah. The Torah is the pathway of righteousness and holiness leading to a deeper walk in God’s/*Elohim* heavenly kingdom. The rabbis say that the ladder (Torah) is a bridge between heaven and earth. In the same way, Yeshua, the Living Torah or the Word of God/*Elohim* made flesh is called: *The Way, The Truth, and The Life* - 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*. God/*Elohim* stood above the ladder to heaven and pronounced the blessing of Abraham onto Jacob (Matthew 19:16-19; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23; Hebrews 10:20; Revelation 22:16).

✠ **Genesis 28:13-15** “And behold, the LORD/*Yahweh* stood above it and said: ‘I am the LORD God/*Yahweh Elohim* of Abraham your father and the God/*Elohim* 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.”

As Jacob offered himself upon *The Stone*, his descendants would indeed receive the land where he rested. His descendants would also 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. God/*Elohim* always promised to watch over the people of Jacob wherever they were and to bring them back to the Promised Land. This promise is for everyone who believes today. Those who follow the God/*Elohim* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will never be forsaken or forgotten. He will watch over them until He has fulfilled His promise and purpose in His people! (Genesis 28:13-15).

In the book written to all Hebrews (In the Bible, all believers are called Hebrews), we are told 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).

Our forefathers were able to move past their personal fears and insecurities because of their trust in Yeshua and belief in His promises as outlined in His Gospel. They saw “today” in an *eternity* understanding because they believed the promises were not only for their day but also *forever* - to their *future* generations (Hebrews Chapters 3-4).

Heirs According To The Promise

Who are the promised children of the Patriarchs and who are those who received the Covenant of Promise?

“And if you *are* Christ’s/*Messiah*’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29).

Those who believe in the God/*Elohim* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and those in Messiah, who believe in what He taught through His Gospel, are the heirs of the Covenant of Promise to the forefathers (Galatians 3:7). This spoken Word to Jacob spanned many generations including this present day - as His Word is an *eternal* Word, called *Today*. The patriarchs believed in *Today* and knew of this generation because God/*Elohim* declared it. They affirmed their belief in His Word as seeing it as already *created in the seed of Jacob* before our day (*olam haba*). That is why the patriarchs and prophets looked forward or could *see* our day, as God’s/*Elohim* Word is an eternal, secure prophecy. So definitive is His Word to the prophets that they could stake their lives on it. That is how great their faith was (Ephesians 1:3-14).

“For thus says the LORD/Yahweh Who created the heavens,
Who is God/*Elohim*, Who formed the earth and made it,
Who has established it,
Who did not create it in vain,
Who formed it to be inhabited...”

*I am the LORD/Yahweh, and there is no other.
I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth;
I did not say to the seed of Jacob, 'Seek Me in vain';
I, the LORD/Yahweh, speak righteousness,
I declare things that are right."
(Isaiah 45:18-19)*

🌿 **Jeremiah 30:8-11** “For it shall come to pass in that day, says the LORD/Yahweh of hosts, ‘that I will break his yoke from your neck [*Jacob*], and will burst your bonds; foreigners shall no more enslave them. But they shall serve the LORD/Yahweh their God/*Elohim*, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them. ‘Therefore do not fear, O My servant *Jacob*,’ says the LORD/Yahweh, ‘nor be dismayed, O *Israel*; for behold, I will save you from afar, and *your seed* from the land of their captivity. *Jacob* shall return, have rest and be quiet, and no one shall make him afraid. For I am with you,’ says the LORD/Yahweh, ‘to save you; though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, yet I will not make a complete end of you [*Jacob*]. But I will correct you in justice, and will not let you go altogether unpunished.’”

The Gate

When Jacob awoke, he was awe-struck and declared,

“How awesome is this place! This is none other than the House of God/*Elohim*. This is the gate of Heaven” (Genesis 28:17).

Gate in Hebrew is Strong’s H8179 שַׁעַר *sha ar* meaning *to split open, entrance, to open, calculate, reason, or controlled access*. Yeshua is the gate and access between heaven and earth (Ephesians 2:18).

🌿 **John 14:6** Jesus/*Yeshua* answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

🌿 **Matthew 7:13-14** “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Luke 13:24).

🌿 **Revelation 21:10-11** “Also she [*the holy Jerusalem*] had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of *Israel*.”

After receiving the Covenant, Jacob, now being betrothed to God/*Elohim*, poured oil on *the stone* as a sign of his commitment. He then made this vow,

“If God/*Elohim* will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD/Yahweh shall be my God/*Elohim*. And this stone which I have set as a

pillar shall be God's/*Elohim* house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You" (Genesis 28:20-22; Exodus 21:19).

Jacob understood that when he dedicated his life to The Covenant, it was then The Covenant Maker's responsibility to provide for him *food and clothing*. In a Hebrew marriage, every bridegroom makes this declaration to his bride and then puts his promise in writing on a wedding document called a *ketubah*. The *ketubah* then stands as a witness before God/*Elohim* that the bridegroom will provide his wife with food, clothing, and conjugal rights. That day, Jacob entered into a Marriage Covenant with *Yeshua* – the Word of God/*Elohim* – the Bridegroom (John 1:1,14; Matthew 9:15; John 3:28-29).

Jacob's Tithe

In these studies, we are learning that the tithe is connected *eternally* to the Covenant. We noticed this when Melchizedek king of Salem greeted Abraham with bread and wine (sign of the Covenant) after Abraham liberated Lot and his family in Genesis 14. In return, Abraham freely gave Melchizedek a tenth from that rescue operation.

📖 **Genesis 14:18-20** “Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he *was* the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: ‘Blessed be Abram of God/*Elohim* Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God/*Elohim* Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand.’” And he [Abraham] gave him a tithe of all.

When God/*Elohim* revealed the Covenant to Jacob, he also offered a tenth of the provision promised to him *in advance*.

📖 **Genesis 28:22** “And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God's/*Elohim*'s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You”

We see these two men offering tithes. Why was the tithe Abraham and Jacob's first response? Why give tithes? Would that be our first response? What is in the tithe that we may not yet understand?

The tithe is *the key* to the Gospel – God's/*Elohim* Kingdom. The tithe was in the beginning / *Genesis/Beresheet*, with Abraham, therefore, is eternal. The tithe is the *first response* or fruit freely offered by those who believe and have faith in His Word. By this seemingly small act, Jacob also entered God's/*Elohim* House that evening. Jacob knew he had been in *the place* where heaven and earth come together *as One*. He was shown God's/*Elohim* eternal Kingdom from beginning to end. Therefore, when he saw the Covenant imparted to him that day, Jacob's immediate response was to honor the physical presence of the Gospel, just as Abraham had freely responded and given his *sacred portion* to Melchizedek. From that time forward, Jacob also promised a tenth of everything God/*Elohim* would provide *in his future* (Genesis 14:18-20).

Hebrews believe that because of the holiness of this event, the evening of Jacob's dream had fallen on the Sabbath or on one of God's/*Elohim* Feast Days, also called Sabbaths.

The House of God/*Elohim*, the tithe, and Sabbath days are not separate from each other, as all are interconnected eternal elements of His Kingdom thus, offered together. These fundamentals are not of this earthly world but are part of His heavenly decree that believers activate on the earth in their response to His Holiness. When His people walk in the redemptive process of the Gospel, and when the House of God/*Elohim* and the Sabbath are present, the service of God's/*Elohim* Kingdom is set in motion and activated in the believer's heart and life through the Spirit of the Holy One. Jacob would have learned about the tithe from his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham. Wherever a believer is, whether in the wilderness or in Jerusalem, the tithe is the first response they honor, as it is about holiness. Tithing is the key to God's/*Elohim* Kingdom on earth that brings a heavenly outpouring to a believer's earthly existence. The tithe reveals *the firstborn response* to His holiness and blessings, *as they are Jacob's inheritance*.

📖 **Deuteronomy 32:9** “For the LORD's/*Yahweh's* portion (is) His people; Jacob [*Israel*] (is) the place of His inheritance.”

Looking directly into heaven/eternity, Jacob could see that *the tithe was the link that triggered the provision held for him in his future*. Knowing his response could have a say in his future, Jacob replied immediately, “*and of all that You give me, I will surely give a tenth to You*” (Genesis 28:22). Jacob did not promise to give the tithe as an *earthly response* to receiving an *earthly blessing* but to receive an *eternal heavenly blessing*, one that would go well past his lifetime and on to his promised seed - all who (in the future) are called by his name, *Israel*. In doing this, Jacob unlocked the true principle behind the tithe and immediately entered into its future provision, bringing honor to The Source of those blessings.

📖 **Hebrews 11:1** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Jacob reached for a rightness and a holiness that was not of his own doing but that which came from above; from an eternal source. He surrendered his life to allow Yeshua to work His right ways through him by His Word *the Gospel*. From that time forward, Jacob was a blessed man. He chose to walk in the truth and to freely offer up the sacred portion to God/*Elohim* with each blessing he received from that day forward.

People who walk in the Renewed Covenant and proclaim Yeshua as their Lord and Savior are called to bring glory to His name by placing their tithe before Him, their High Priest, as a holy response to the fruit He has placed within us all, as was taught by our forefathers before us. This tithe is not for our generation but for the generations to come. The fruit of our tithe seeds into our future descendants - our children's children. That is our inheritance (Hebrews 7:1-10).

Jacob's Well Genesis 29

Jacob continued his long journey to Haran, the birthplace of his mother Rebekah and the home of his uncle Laban, Rebekah's brother. On Jacob's arrival, he noticed a well. When we see the word

well in Scripture, we understand that a prophetic picture is about to unfold, as *wells* represent a place of anointing.

🌿 **Genesis 29:1-3** “So Jacob went on his journey and came to the land of the people of the East. And he looked, and saw a well in the field; and behold, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks. A large stone was on the well’s mouth. Now all the flocks would be gathered there; and they would roll the stone from the well’s mouth, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the well’s mouth.”

The fuller understanding of the word *well* in Hebrew Strong’s H875 בְּעַר *be’er* comes from the root word Strong’s H874 בָּאָר *ba’ar* meaning: *writing on tablets of stone made clear and distinct, some writing upon tablets which is legible at a hurried glance* and in a figurative use the verb means *to make clear by explaining*.

🌿 **Habakkuk 2:2** “Then the LORD/Yahweh answered me and said: ‘Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it’” (Deuteronomy 1:5, 27:8).

A *field* usually represents the opposite, a place of wilderness outside of God’s/Elohim Kingdom, His protection, His provision, and His covering. As Jacob approached the well, he noticed three flocks lying near this well in the *field* waiting for water, but *a stone* was over its mouth preventing the sheep from accessing *this water*. Being concerned about their poor treatment Jacob approached the shepherds. First, he inquired after his uncle and found that they were from Haran and knew Laban, Nahor’s grandson. That was Jacob’s confirmation that he had reached his destination and was about to walk into his future. Around the same time, Laban’s daughter Rachel approached the well *with her Father’s sheep*. The meaning of Rachel’s name in Hebrew is *ewe*, meaning a female sheep (Strong’s H7354 רַחֵל).

Even though Laban’s daughter approached, Jacob still kept his focus on the neglected flocks. Waiting in the heat of the day with no water made the sheep weak. With no life-sustaining food or water, they were dependent on others for their very survival. Disturbed by this, Jacob did not hesitate to pass on his concern. In approaching these shepherds, he said, “*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.*” Jacob notified the shepherds that these sheep were not able to help themselves and needed to be pastured (understand the Gospel). The well represents the fullness of the Gospel and the sheep (God’s/Elohim people) that require the *living* water of the Messiah.

🌿 **Amos 8:11** “Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord GOD/Adonai Elohim, “That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD/Yahweh.”

These false shepherds were set in their traditional ways and not willing to change regardless of the needs of the sheep under their care. Thus, they made excuses to Jacob saying,

✿ **Genesis 29:8** “We cannot until all the flocks are gathered together, and they have rolled the stone from the well’s mouth; then we water the sheep.”

The stone covering the well represent those with hearts of stone who resist the living water.

The House of Judah was given the responsibility of feeding the Gospel to the nations/sheep until the day of Messiah (Genesis 49:10). Many shepherds and the sheep of the House of Israel missed seeing the Messiah when He came as they lacked proper care by their shepherds who did not share the Gospel with them nor help them drink this living water due to their empty works. On the other hand, shepherds over *The House of Israel (Joseph)*, those brought up in a Church environment, also rejected the Hebrew roots of their Messiah. They would not accept Yeshua in His Priestly Hebraic garments on His Feast Days. They too were trying to gather the sheep without first feeding them the truth found in the Gospel. Thus, there was no living water provided in the words they voiced. Therefore, they too were empty cisterns.

✿ **Romans 11:25-27** “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel [*House of Judah*] until the fullness of the Gentiles [*House of Israel/Ephraim/Joseph/the Nations*] has come in. And so all Israel [*The whole united House of Israel*] will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from **Jacob**. For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins’”(Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-10).

✿ **Hosea 4:6** “My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge [*the Gospel/God’s teaching and instruction: Torah*], I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law [*Torah*] of your God/*Elohim*, I also will ignore your children” (1 Peter 2:9-10; Revelation 1:6). (Note: Hosea was a prophet to the House of Israel/Ephraim).

As soon as Jacob saw Rachel approach the well with her *Father’s sheep*, he saw his likeness in her and quickly *rolled the stone away*, watering her sheep himself. That is a picture of Yeshua rolling the stone away revealing the life-giving source of His life to those who desire to walk in Him.

✿ **Isaiah 12:3** “Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation [*Yeshua*].”

Rachel’s sheep were the first to receive this life-giving source before the other flocks at the well. Her sheep represent the *other* tribes; the ten hidden tribes of Israel called the Northern Kingdom or the House of Joseph. In the two shepherding groups pictured in this story of Jacob (representing the Messiah and His care of the Gospel/truth), the two houses of Israel were now able to be gathered together without restriction and freely able to drink water from the well of living water (John 4:5-26; Acts 1:6; Mark 1:3-4).

✿ **John 10:16** “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.

The Kiss

When Jacob watered Rachel's sheep, he kissed her and wept. This was prophetic of the Messiah Yeshua, who wept over His sheep before His death. His kiss of love to them would bring about His death, but in His death was the life source for all in His sheepfold (Luke 22:44).

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, 3-4).

Two People Groups

John 4:4-30

As mentioned earlier, we see two people groups/sheep in Genesis 29. The one group waiting at the well (*House of Judah*), and the sheep Rachel brought to the well (*House of Joseph*), prophetic of 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).

Jacob's story is seen again in John 4:4-30 when Yeshua traveled through Samaria to visit His lost sheep. At the time Samaria was the capital of the Northern Kingdom and represented the House of Israel. Being a mixture from the nations who had invaded that area years earlier, the Samaritans were not well liked by the Hebrews (2 Kings 17:22-24). It was at the sixth hour when the sun was highest and hottest that Yeshua approached a Samaritan woman at *Jacob's well*. She represented the ten hidden tribes of the Northern Kingdom (Rachel's sheep). Yeshua asked this woman for a drink of water and then shared with her about the *living water*. When the woman saw Yeshua did not have a cup with which to draw water from Jacob's well, she questioned Him. How would He get this living water? 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 then revealed He was the source of the living water. He also told her of a time coming when worshippers would worship God/*Elohim* in *spirit and truth*. The woman (being the House of Israel) informed Him that the Jews (House of Judah) were waiting (the sheep waiting at the well) for their Messiah and that when He comes, He will tell them everything. Yeshua said to the woman, "*The one speaking to you is He.*"

Uncle Laban

Genesis 29

When Jacob met his uncle Laban, he shared his story. He then worked for Laban a month until wages were set between them. During that time, Jacob had fallen in love with Laban's youngest daughter Rachel. He suggested working for Laban seven years as her bridal price or dowry.

Laban agreed to the terms. However, at the fulfilled time, Laban substituted his older daughter Leah for Rachel. Undiscerning of the deception, Jacob married Leah.

Seven years represented a sabbatical seven-year cycle for the land called the *Shmita* in Torah. Every seven years the land must have a period of rest. They were not to reap the harvest for profit that year but were allowed to enjoy the produce coming from that seventh year. During the Shmita, all debts were to be canceled. Any Hebrew man or woman who had agreed to work for his or her freedom (from slavery or debt) would be freed in that seventh year and given a generous supply of flocks, as well as produce from the land that he or she helped generate. That seemed to be the case with Jacob. In the sabbatical year, he came to claim what was rightfully promised to him. Instead, he was tricked, just as he had deceived Isaac and Esau seven years earlier.

The *Stone's Edition Chumash* traditionally describes Leah and Rachel as twins, just as Jacob and Esau were twins. Scripture states the main difference between the two women was that Rachel was *lovely in form and beauty*, and Leah had *weak eyes*. The Hebrew character of weak eyes described a tender, soft, delicate (of flesh), weak of heart, timid or gentle (of words). We see then that Leah was shy or timid; lacking self-confidence compared to Rachel whose character and natural beauty demonstrated both strength and confidence. This marriage to Leah may have been a lesson for Jacob, as he had earlier taken advantage of his father Isaac's weak eyes in usurping his position over his brother Esau.

Discovering he had been tricked, Jacob confronted Laban. They again made arrangements for Rachel with Laban determining that Jacob must work another seven years for her dowry payment. 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 barrenness out on Jacob. He pointed out that the fault lay not with him but that her frustration was with God/*Elohim* who had not released children to her. Rachel then took things into her own hands and offered her maidservant Bilhah to Jacob that she might act as a surrogate for her. Bilhah produced Dan and Naphtali for Rachel. Leah, seeing she had stopped having children, also offered her maidservant. Zilpah surrogated two more children for Leah; 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 God/*Elohim* remembered Rachel; He listened to her and opened her womb. She became pregnant and gave birth to a son saying, ‘God/*Elohim* has taken away my disgrace.’ She named her firstborn Joseph, and said, ‘May the LORD/*Yahweh* add to me another son’” (Genesis 30:22-24).

Jacob's Sheep

Haran was the birthplace of the tribes of Israel, except for Benjamin. The two houses or kingdoms came from the two wives of Jacob: Leah and Rachel and their surrogates. The jealousy that existed between the two sisters during that time has continued to this day. When Leah and

Rachel's children recognize their identity and heritage in the Covenant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and those who have been renewed in the Messiah, then the jealousy will end, and they will once again act 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 allow him to return to his homeland. They discussed Jacob's wages due him and agreed that all the marked or colored sheep, lambs, and goats would be Jacob's. His sheep are about God's/*Elohim* sheep who are a multi-colored people.

Jacob journeyed three days to separate his flocks so there would be no mistaking his sheep from Laban's. This picture references believers, as they are to be a set-apart people. We are not to mix unclean with holiness. Not only did Jacob care for his own sheep during that time, but Laban's also. Jacob's flock increased significantly especially when placed in front of freshly stripped branches of poplar, almond, and plane trees at their watering troughs (Genesis 30:37). These branches reference being obedient to Torah and receiving the blessings that flow when honoring the Word of God/*Elohim*.

📖 **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.”

During that time, Jacob's household increased substantially. He grew exceedingly prosperous with an abundance of flocks, maidservants, menservants, camels, and donkeys. Because of this, Laban's household became jealous and started talking slanderously against Jacob. Laban listened to them. As a result, his attitude changed toward Jacob. It takes just one maligned accusation to turn a whole people against the innocent.

Depending on which tree God's/*Elohim* people eat from when *lashon hara* (gossip or slander) challenges His people they can either succumb to it or rise above it and be overcomers. God/*Elohim* will judge those who slander. If His people come to understand that God/*Elohim* is with them, to encourage, then they will see tests are a way that can promote His people and help draw them closer to Him. Challenges introduce us to greater responsibilities in His Kingdom and help teach and develop a deeper impartation of His indwelling Spirit within our lives.

According to the Book of James in the New Testament/*Brit Chadasha*, challenges that arise in our lives are to be considered pure joy so that perseverance might finish its work of perfecting maturity in us. Those who choose to walk in Yeshua's ways are to persevere through the challenges, which enable His Holy Spirit/*Ruach HaKodesh* to activate within, as He is faithful to His Covenant over us.

📖 **James 1:2-4** “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

The Separation Genesis 31

Continuing with Jacob's story in Genesis 31, the time had come for him to separate from Laban's ever-changing demands. God/*Elohim* commanded Jacob to leave Haran, to depart from the growing contempt and jealousy toward him, and return to his native land. By this time Rachel and Leah had lost all respect for their father, as he had continuously used them as leverage in his schemes against Jacob. Through Jacob's life, example, and kindness, they saw the real truth and learned to put their faith and trust in the God/*Elohim* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 31:18).

Do married couples leave their father and mother today and cleave to one another? A healthy relationship with parents and in-laws is wonderful and to be encouraged. After all, it is they who have the responsibility of laying a strong foundation in God's/*Elohim* Word from which the young couple draws from as they go forward in their marriage. However, when a spouse has a co-dependent relationship with one or both parents or carries an inherited iniquity from past generations into the marriage, they do not truly leave their parents nor cleave to their spouse. In a sense, they have brought their father or mother's spiritual baggage, along with their undesirable characteristics, into the marriage. Cross contamination will encumber the young couple desiring to become one with each other, which weakens marriage and in some cases brings divorce. Looking at your spouse through the eyes of a parent or continuing to operate in generational curses can lead to an imbalanced unhealthy marriage that will also affect the children. While married couples need to have a healthy respect for their parents, they also must get on with the business of creating a healthy relationship and family identity of their own that is directly focused and based on God/*Elohim* and His Word. He alone has the plan and purpose for their lives and only He can guide them (Genesis 2:24).

The Return

While packing for their journey, Rachel stole her father's pagan household gods. In doing this, she chose not to leave her family's identity (idolatry and adultery) behind. That very act brought a curse upon her that would eventually lead to her death. Without saying farewell to Laban, Jacob gathered his family and left (Genesis 31:19).

The flocks went before Jacob and his family as they made their way to the land of Canaan and back to Jacob's father, Isaac. On their third day of travel, Laban was told of their leaving. It took seven more days for him to catch up with them. Through a dream, Laban was warned not to speak *lashon hara* (slander) against Jacob. He did, however, confront Jacob for leaving without allowing him to say goodbye to his daughters and grandchildren. As the story unfolds, we find what seems more important to Laban were his idols, which he quickly inquired after. The impression is, Laban held his gods in higher priority than his family.

Conversely, Jacob was so sure of the purity and loyalty of his family that he told Laban if anyone had stolen Laban's gods; *the guilty party would not live*. He then permitted Laban to search his camp. The vow Jacob pronounced was an irrevocable curse. He had no idea his beloved wife Rachel had taken her father's family idols. With her stealing Laban's idols, they not only

contaminated their marriage but eventually the whole community would suffer because of them (Genesis 31:22-35).

When Jacob saw that Laban's heart was not for his family, he finally stood up to Laban's dominance and intimidation. Laban, in turn, saw it was time 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).

When Laban left, Jacob then changed his focus toward the more significant challenge in his return – the meeting between he and his brother Esau. Along the way, God/*Elohim* sent messengers to encourage Jacob. When he saw them, he knew God/*Elohim* was with him and said, “*This is God's/Elohim camp!*” So he named the place Mahanaim meaning *Two Camps* (Genesis 32:2).

🏰 **Hosea 12:2-5** “The LORD/*Yahweh* also has a dispute with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his ways; He will repay him according to his deeds. In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his maturity he contended with God/*Elohim*. Yes, he wrestled with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought His favor. He found Him at Bethel, and there He spoke with us, even the LORD/*Yahweh*, the God/*Elohim* of hosts; The LORD/*Yahweh* is His name.”

To be continued...

Shabbat Shalom
Julie Parker

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