
Pearl Seeking

TREASURING HIS WORD

Let's do a quick overview of the entire Torah portion:

Monday:	Gen. 28:10-22	Ya'aqob's dream at Beyth El and his promise to Yahweh
Tuesday:	Gen. 29	Ya'aqob meets Rahel; Laban deceives Ya'aqob; Wages and serving for Rahel; Le'ah has 4 sons
Wednesday:	Gen. 30	More wives, more sons and a daughter; Ya'aqob wants to leave with his family; Outwitting Laban and his games
Thursday:	Gen. 31:1-21	Ya'aqob takes his portion and family and leaves; Rahel steals the house idols from her father
Friday:	Gen. 31:22 -32:2	Laban tries to get his family and his idols back; An agreement is made between Ya'aqob and Laban

In parsha Toldot 6.1 Ya'aqob took his brother Esaw's birthright and deceived his father Yitshaq in order to receive the eldest brother's blessing. In parsha Vayeitzei 7.1 Ya'aqob was sent away to his mother's relatives to escape Esaw's wrath. On the way, he had a dream wherein Yahweh made a covenant with Ya'aqob, just as He did with his grandfather Abraham and his father Yitshaq. In this week's Parsha Pearls lesson, Ya'aqob arrives at his destination - the home of his uncle Laban and his 2 daughters, Le'ah and Rahel. He will go there empty-handed, but will leave with many possessions. Now, let's read Gen. 29: 30:1-13, 17-24.

PARSHA POINTS

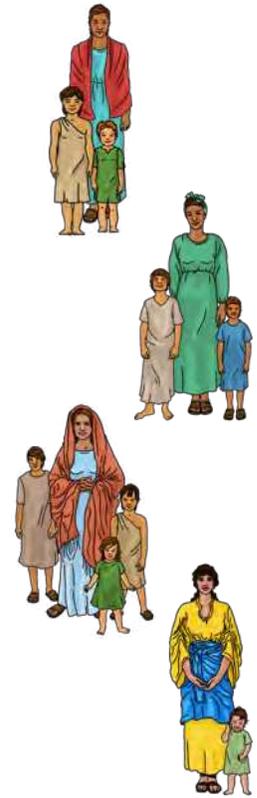
- On his way to his mother's (**em**) relatives, Ya'aqob encountered some shepherds at a well and greeted them as brothers (**ach**). He asked them if they knew Laban, son (**ben**) of Nahor - 29:5
- The men replied that they did know Laban, and that his daughter (**bat**) Rahel would soon be coming to the well with the sheep - 29:6
- When Rahel arrived with the sheep, Ya'aqob rolled (**galal**) the stone (**evan**) from the well so that she could give the flock some water - 29:10
- Meeting Rahel was a highly emotional moment for Ya'aqob. He gave her a kiss and told her that he was her father's (**av**) relative - 29:11-12
- When Laban heard that Ya'aqob was his sister's (**achot**) son, he ran to meet him with a hug and a kiss, then brought him back to his home - 29:13



- After Laban had hosted Ya'aqob for a month, he asked Ya'aqob what wages he would require to work for him. Ya'aqob answered that he would serve Laban 7 (sheva) years if he would give him his daughter Rahel - 29:14-18
- Laban reasoned that it was better that he give her to Ya'aqob rather than any other man, so he agreed to give Rahel to Ya'aqob after he had worked for 7 years - 29:19
- Laban also had an older daughter whose name was Le'ah. She had 'weak eyes' (an idiom for suggesting that she was plain or not pretty), whereas Rahel was described as very beautiful - 29:17
- The 7 years that Ya'aqob worked for Laban seemed to go by fast because of the love he felt for Rahel - 29:20
- After his days were completed, he asked Laban to give him Rahel for his wife - 29:21
- Laban gathered his men together and made a great feast for this wedding celebration - 29:22
- However, that night Laban did not give Ya'aqob Rahel for his wife as he had said, but instead deceived Ya'aqob and gave him Le'ah the elder sister - 29:23
- Along with Le'ah, a female servant named Zilpah was provided to attend her - 29:24
- In the morning, Ya'aqob was shocked to discover that he'd been given Le'ah, not Rahel. He was very upset over this deception - 29:25
- Laban justified his actions by informing Ya'aqob that the custom was to marry off an elder daughter first - 29:26
- He soothed Ya'aqob by offering to give him Rahel at the end of the week as well, but only if he would serve Laban yet another 7 years - 29:27
- Ya'aqob loved Rahel so much that he agreed to this plan - 29:28
- Laban also gave his daughter Rahel a female servant by the name of Bilhah - 29:29
- Although Le'ah was unloved by Ya'aqob, Yahweh opened up Le'ah's womb and closed up Rahel's - 29:31
- Le'ah gave Ya'aqob (29:32-35):
 - his 1st son, Re'uben - (meaning, 'look or behold a son')
 - his 2nd son, Shim'on - (meaning, 'hearing or listen')
 - his 3rd son, Lewi - (meaning, 'joined or united')
 - his 4th son, Yehudah - (meaning, 'praise')
- Rahel became envious of her sister's fertility, and pleaded with her husband to also give her a child - 30:1
- But Ya'aqob was angry with Rahel for blaming him for her barrenness. He stated that Yahweh Himself had withheld children from her; only He could decide to open up her womb to conceive children - 30:2
- Rahel then told Ya'aqob to take her female servant Bilhah and have children by her so that Rahel could call them her own - 30:3



- Bilhah gave Ya'aqob (30:4-8):
 - his 5th son, Dan - (meaning, 'to judge')
 - his 6th son, Naphtali (meaning, 'wrestle' or 'struggle')
- At this point, Le'ah stopped having children, so she gave her female servant Zilpah to Ya'aqob to bear him children in her name - 30:9
- Zilpah gave Ya'aqob (30:10-13):
 - his 7th son, Gad - (meaning, 'fortune')
 - his 8th son, Asher - (meaning, 'blessed' or 'happy')
- Le'ah conceived again and gave Ya'aqob (30:17-21):
 - his 9th son, Yissaskar - (meaning, 'hire')
 - his 10th son, Zebulun - (meaning, 'dwelling')
 - his 1st daughter, Dinah
- Then Yahweh opened up Rahel's womb, and she gave Ya'aqob (30:22-24):
 - his 11th son, Yoseph - (meaning, 'add')



DIGGING DEEPER

Parents/Teachers may choose to use these prompts for further discussion of the Torah portion.

- In previous parshas we looked at several stories about wells (Abraham's servant meets Ribqah at a well; Abraham and Yitshaq both have conflict with Sovereign Abimelek over wells). In this parsha we read that Ya'aqob helped Rahel give her sheep water by removing the stone from a well. Research the importance of wells (similar to the town square) and the protocol for using someone's well. What were the rights of the well's owner? (29:1-10) Notice that the men could not water their sheep until Rahel showed up. (29:8)
- In Genesis 29:5, Ya'aqob ask the shepherds if they know Laban, calling him the son of Nahor. Yet we are told in previous chapters that Laban was the son of Bethu'el, whose father was Nahor. (24:15) Discuss the tradition referring to the father of the clan one was from rather than to the actual parent.
- Remember that Ya'aqob had deceived his own father by pretending to be Esaw. Do you think that Ya'aqob was getting his just rewards when Laban did the same thing to him by disguising his daughter Le'ah as her sister Rahel, the intended bride?
- In this parsha we see both sisters driven by their competition to give children to Ya'aqob. Each of them presents her female servant to Ya'aqob as a concubine, in order to get offspring through her servant. Compare this to Sarah, who also took matters into her own hands by giving her female servant to Abraham. What were the ramifications of that choice? Do you think these wives had a lack of faith?