

**And Yaakov left Beer Sheva and went to Charan (28:10)** – The commentaries debate why the Torah had to focus on both where Yaakov left from and where he was going. That is because people leave somewhere sometimes to get away from something and sometimes to get somewhere. In Yaakov's case he was doing both. He was leaving his parent's home to get away from Eisav but also in order to go to Charan to find a wife. **The Steipler ztl.** adds that the same was true in the olden days when even one who left the Yeshiva to go to work was able to remain committed to Torah values. Still, he needed to begin his life in Yeshiva to learn how to remain Torah true. Today, one needs to go to get a Yeshiva education even if he will not be a successful Lamdan merely to serve as a deterrent from the streets.

**And behold there was a ladder with its feet on the ground and its head in the heavens (28:12)** – **Rav Chaim Sabato Shlita** explains that the dream was a message based on Yaakov's thoughts. It was a reference to man's role in the world. We live to climb the ladder one step at a time. If we take it each step at a time, there is no limit to how high we can go – assuming we want to go. At the same time, Hashem's influence meets us going downward until they get us into the ground at the darkest of moments – and then they too, rise up. Yaakov, the forefather who prepares us for Galus, teaches us that even in the darkest of times, we need to keep climbing and the challenges will rise with us.

**And there was a big stone on the mouth of the well (29:2)** – **Rav Zevin ztl.** sees a critical mission to Jews in the lesson of well. The well represents holiness and purity and anything positive in the world finds at its source, the well and water. There are many forces that try to find the purity, to uncover it and sometimes to pollute it. But a world without the purity and holiness in it is a dry and uncomfortable place. Yaakov teaches his children that no matter the cover, he and his children will always be able to push off the toughest stones that keep us from the holiness and reveal the source of purity for us.

**This time I'll thank Hashem (29:35)** – The Talmud praises Leah as the first who thanked Hashem. Why is she so praised for this? **Rav Schachter Shlita** noted that when we don't have everything we need – we need to ask Hashem for everything. (This is part of the curse of the Nachash who has Afar to eat his entire life and does not appreciate the chance to thank Hashem for it.) The unique part of Leah's action was that she DID receive more than her share and still offered appropriate thanks to Hashem.

**Hashem has judged me and also given me a child (30:6)** – In what way was judgement a factor here? **Rav Dovid Tevel ztl.** explains that Rachel took solace because, says the midrash, she knew that the Moshiach Ben Dovid would come from Yehudah. She took solace in knowing that that she helped birth those destined to help Yehudah. Whenever the leadership of Yehuda is called upon to bring the people to spiritual heights, Dan stands at his side as an assistant to make the possibility into something that happens. The mishkan get built by Betzalel and Oholiav, the mikdash by Shlomo and Chiram. Each time it is the 2 Shevatim working together.

**Yaakov summoned Rachel and Leah to the field (31:4)** – **The Rebbe Reb Elimelech Biderman Shlita** quotes the Shelah HaKadosh who explains that there are 2 ways to convince people to follow a path – coercion and persuasion. When one coerces, s/he is not maximizing the power of the argument. This is especially true in the world of Chinuch (and of Shalom Bayis). Where possible, persuasion is better than coercion. Where there is coercion, there is always friction, and the atmosphere is unpleasant. Even if there is compliance, the hard feeling is there. Therefore, it is beneficial to learn the art of persuasion.

**Why did you hide to run away (31:27)** – Yaakov was a tremendously strong man – he was able to defeat a Malach. His children too, were quite strong. Why then does he run away from Lavan? What was he afraid of? **Rav Elyashiv ztl.** explains that Yaakov was not afraid of Lavan per se. However, he did not want to have to confront Lavan for he knew that if he did, Hashem would strike Lavan down and it would look like Yaakov was a Kafui Tova – an ingrate – for destroying the man who gave him everything. Fearful of a Chilul Hashem, Yaakov preferred to leave quietly.

**Haftorah: Yaakov fled to Aram (Hoshea 12:13)** – Why does the Novi want the people to know about Yaakov's flight? **Rashi and Redak** both comment that the message was part of Hashem's promise that he was not going to leave them no matter where they went. **Malbim** disagrees and notes that Hoshea is criticizing the people for their primary Avairos of deceit and idolatry. In noting that Yaakov engaged deceit, he was also met with deceit. The same would be true for his children if they do not change their ways. **Rav Gideon Weitzman Shlita** explains that Yaakov became influenced by appearance (hence he remained for the additional 6 years – hence the change from working to guarding in the Haftorah) which came about because of complacency. We are called to action as Jews and not to descend in to the path of Avoda Zara – of passivity.