

PARASHAT VAYEITZEI

(HE WENT OUT)

GENESIS 28:10-32:3

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading:

Hosea 12:13(12)–14:10(9)

B'rit Chadashah:

On the twelve tribes of Israel: **Matthew 10:6; 15:24; 19:28; Luke 22:30; Hebrews 8:6–8; James 1:1; Revelation 21:12**

Yeshua on being the “ladder” to heaven: **John 1:43–51**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion):

- 28:10 Jacob Flees Canaan and His Vision at Moriah of the Ladder to Heaven
- 29:1 Jacob Meets Rachel at the Well
- 29:14 Jacob Contracts With Laban to Marry Rachel and Laban Deceives Him
- 29:24 The Morning After Jacob Discovers That Laban Substituted Leah for Rachel
- 29:31 Leah Gives Birth to Four Sons
- 30:2 Bilah, Rachel's Handmaid, Bears a Son
- 30:14 Reuben Finds *Dudaim* (an aphrodisiac)
- 30:17 Leah's Last Three Children
- 30:22 Rachel Gives Birth to Joseph
- 30:27 Jacob Wants to Leave But Instead Formulates a New Employment Contract With Laban
- 30:25 Laban Deceives Jacob Again
- 31:1 Jacob Decides to Flee Laban
- 31:17 Jacob's Escape
- 31:22 Laban Pursues Jacob and Elohim Warns Laban Not to Pursue Him
- 31:25 Confrontation Between Laban and Jacob
- 31:44 Laban Proposes a Treaty With Jacob
- 32:1 Laban Departs

Study Questions For This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion):

- 1 **28:10–22**, Jacob dreams of a ladder whose base is set in the earth and whose top (or head) reaches into heaven. Discuss the meaning of this symbolic dream in light of Yeshua's words in John 1:51 and 14:6. (See also Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:10,19.)
- 2 **28:10–22**, When most believers in Yeshua think of the word *gospel* what immediately comes to mind is the basic salvation message of the New Testament (or the Renewed Covenant or Apostolic Scriptures). Yet in several places in the Apostolic Scriptures, the writers put forth the idea of the eternal nature of the gospel message; that is, that the same message taught by Yeshua, Paul, *et al* was the exact message preached to the ancients including the Patriarchs. For example, note Galatians 3:8, 1 Peter 4:6 and Revelation 14:6. Reflect back over the past Torah portion studies. How was the gospel message preached to Adam and Eve? (Gen 3:15,21) To Cain and Abel? (Gen 4:4) To Noah? To Abraham? (Read Gen 22) And now to Jacob in the dream of the ladder to heaven? *What* is the central message of these passages and *who* is the central figure of this gospel? If the message of redemption and the blood atonement were preached to these personages of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament or Tanakh) then does it follow that as we *look back* to the cross (and to Yeshua) YHVH's people who lived prior to the cross simply *looked forward* to it? Does it therefore follow that the righteous who lived prior to the cross were saved in the same manner as we are today? By grace, through faith in Yeshua? (See Gen 6:8 and 15:6 cp. Rom 4:3,9,22; Gal 3:6; Eph 2:8.)
- 3 **28:1–22** and **29:1**, Jacob was fleeing the home of his father Isaac, *Beth-el* or *House of El*. He was heading east some 500 miles on foot as a lone traveler and fugitive en route to Babylon (definitely *not* the House of El). The same Scriptures elsewhere refers prophetically to Babylon as “the habitation of devils and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird” (Rev 18:2). Through human effort, Jacob had connived to procure the birthright blessing and in so doing had stepped out of the will of YHVH by having faith in himself instead of divine Providence. But O for the grace of YHVH! Even as his father Isaac earlier during a time of famine had fled Canaan for Egypt had stepped out of the perfect will of YHVH, he was met by YHVH who graciously comforted him and redirected his steps (Gen 26:1–6). Likewise, YHVH met the lonely Jacob and encouraged him at the outset of his long journey, for in 29:1 we read, “Jacob lifted up his feet and came into the land of the people of the east” (KJV, marginal reference). What can we learn about the ways of YHVH from these examples? Are you in tune with his methods of operation in the life of the believer? The more we study the Word of YHVH and the examples of the lives of those showcased therein the more we can learn about our own lives. So study the recorded events about the lives of YHVH's servants of old to learn wisdom for your daily life and spiritual walk.
- 4 Jacob's dream in Genesis 28 was his first, life-changing personal encounter with the Elohim of his fathers (Gen 28:10ff). What is his response? It was to serve YHVH and to worship him by giving him one-tenth (a tithe) of his increase (verse 22). What prompted this response on Jacob's part? Why was such a response appropriate? When did you have your first encounter with your Heavenly Father and Master? Have you faithfully used the first fruits of your increase to honor, worship and express gratitude to him ever since? If not, why not? Scripture calls not tithing “robbing Elohim” and that as a result a curse may be on your finances. (Read Mal 3:8–11.) Proverbs 3:9 lays out a solid truth about how tithing is a form of worshipping the Creator. “Honour [glorify] YHVH with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.”
- 5 Scripture reveals the spiritual law of reciprocity: You reap what you sow (Gen 8:22; Gal 6:7–9). If you don't sow you will not reap. If you sow evil or good you will reap the same. Jacob had to learn this law the hard way. In Job 4:8 we read, “Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.” Jacob gained the birthright through posing as Esau (a deception) and Laban in turn deceives Jacob by putting Leah under the veil posing as Rachel in Jacob's marriage bed. It is very easy to see the principle of reaping and sowing in others' lives, but can we see it in our own life? It is very difficult to do so! Aren't we prone to concoct every excuse and argument imaginable to justify our sinful actions and then blame the results on others? Prayerfully take a long and hard look at your life, examine hardships and trials, and honestly ask yourself the question: am I reaping what I have sown? It is never too late to repent and make

a course correction—to bring your life into agreement with YHVH’s Word and will and to start reaping the blessings.

6 Honesty, patience and submission to authority are fruits of righteousness. What did YHVH have to teach Jacob about these fruits of the Spirit? Jacob was impatient in submitting to YHVH’s will and waiting for the birthright to come to him in a righteous way. How did YHVH use Laban to correct these character flaws in Jacob? Jacob had to go into the Babylonian world for a season in order to be refined before being ready to be a Patriarch worthy of honor and an example of righteousness as the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. What is YHVH allowing you to go through to refine you of character flaws and defects to prepare you for the future mission he has for you? Are you submitting to his refining fires that are burning the wood, hay and stubble out of your life, or are you resisting him thereby forcing him to “turn up the heat” so that you will finally “get the point” and learn your lessons? (Read Heb 12:5–15.)

7 Jacob was forced to go east (toward Babylon) as a form of exile and punishment for his sins. After serving as a bondservant to Laban for 22 years, he returned westward to Canaan, the land of promise. This eastward-westward movement was a pattern followed by Jacob’s descendants later on several occasions. Even Abraham left Babylon and went west to Canaan. Discuss the prophetic implications of this in the end times when YHVH is calling his people to “come out” of spiritual Babylon (Rev 18:4).

8 Jacob builds a complete family in “exile” consisting of twelve tribal leaders. To return to the Promised Land of Canaan, he had to encounter Esau (or Edom) who is the father of many of the modern day Arab peoples. What is this a prophetic picture of? Did the Jewish exilic remnant encounter Esau’s descendants when they come back from Babylon under Ezra and Nehemiah? Is it happening again in our time as the exiled Jews return to Israel—their homeland? Who currently is opposing their return and openly vows to annihilate them? Discuss Edom’s opposition to Jacob past, present and future. What (or who) is really behind this opposition to Israel’s (Jacob’s) inheriting his birthright that includes a land inheritance whose borders are from Egypt to the Euphrates River in modern Iraq?

9 **29:32–30:24**, Earlier we mentioned that Scripture teaches that the gospel was preached not only to the first century believers, but to the ancients, as well, including the Patriarchs. Here is another example of this in the meanings of the names of the sons of Jacob. They are: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph and Benjamin (who was not born until Gen 35:18). Translated their names mean: Reuben/“See, a Son,” (this points to Yeshua), Simeon/“Hearing” (hear the Son or gospel/good news), Levi/“Joined” (referring to the union by which the Set-Apart Spirit makes us one with the Son through the hearing of the gospel), Judah/“Praise” (the response of the redeemed upon being joined to Yeshua and becoming regenerated spiritually or born from above), Dan/“Judgment” (the believer, though worthy of judgment for his sin, has passed from judgment to life through the atoning blood of Yeshua, Naphtali/“Wrestling” (this speaks of the believer’s life as he struggles against the world, flesh and the devil endeavoring to walk righteously), Gad/“Troop, Company” (this speaks of the fellowship of believers in the household of faith), the result of fellowship is Asher/“Happiness,” Issachar/“Hire” (once a part of the spiritual body of believers, one is equipped for works of service in advancing the kingdom of Elohim as a bondservant), Zebulun/“Dwelling, Exalt, Honor” (we are to occupy until Yeshua comes again while we honor and exalt him before the Gentiles), Joseph/“Adding” (can refer to adding to the body of believers in Yeshua through outreach or to rewards in YHVH’s eternal kingdom for a job well done laboring in YHVH’s spiritual field), and Benjamin/“Son of My Right Hand” (a reference to Yeshua who sits at the right hand of YHVH and to believers who are seated with Yeshua in heavenly places, by faith). It starts with Yeshua and ends with him. He is the *Aleph* and the *Tav* (or *Alpha* and *Omega*), the Beginning and the End, the Author and Finisher of our faith! Give him glory! Pause and reflect on these names. Is it possible that the mind of man could have cleverly contrived these names and their order about 1800 years before the birth of Yeshua? Where are you in this prophetic scenario? In your spiritual walk have you passed through the reality of each of the twelve steps? Perhaps this is the world’s original “twelve-step program”!

10 **31:43**, Laban claims Jacob’s wives and children to be his own. He was also steeped in the idolatry of Babylon having in his possession idols or images called *teraphim* (31:19,34–35). Is there a modern counterpart

to this? Does modern Babylon want to control and possess spiritual Israel's wives and children, indoctrinate them in its pagan religious system and keep Jacob's modern descendants from returning to their spiritual and physical homeland and birthright inheritance, and from returning to the Torah-faith of their fathers? Are modern governments (e.g., public education and Child Protective Services, welfare programs, various government regulations that have greatly diminished or eliminated many of our freedoms) and socio-political organizations (e.g. ACLU, UN) modern-day Labans? Revelation 18:13 says that Babylon the Great traffics in the souls of men. This speaks of the modern day enslavement of men—of their religious expression, freedom of thought and action—at some level. (Discuss.)

11 It is quite possible that the false prophet Balaam, who heard from YHVH and had a sense of righteousness, though was still steeped in paganism, was a descendant of Laban. Both were from Aram and only 280 years separated them. One of the Aramaic Targums (*Targum Jonathan*) equates Balaam with Laban, while other scholars view Balaam as Laban's grandson. Whatever the case, both were involved in a mixed-religious system—some truth and some error, some good and some evil. This is the nature of religious Babylon (meaning “mixture” or “confusion”). A mixture of what? Of good and evil. Remember the tree by that name in the Garden of Eden? Who was the one who enticed man to indulge in that fruit in rebellion to YHVH's commands? Is not religious Babylon of today, out of which YHVH is calling his people (Rev 18:4), just that—a mixture of truth and pagan lies? How else, for one example, do we account for the name of the Christian festival called *Easter* or *Ishtar* named after the Babylonian sex goddess of fertility? Or how else do we account for the Christmas tree phallus symbol that also originated from Babylonian sex worship? Or how about the Easter egg or the egg on the Jewish Passover *Seder* plate? All are symbols of pagan sex worship. As YHVH called Jacob away from Babylon back to *Beth-el* (*the House of El*), and as YHVH turned Jacob's heart back to the ways of his fathers, is not the same YHVH likewise now calling his people to come out of religious Babylon (Rev 18:4), to separate themselves from that which is unclean or *not kosher* (2 Cor 6:17), to remember the Torah of Moses his servant and to listen to the spirit of Elijah as the children's hearts turn back to the fathers (Mal 4:4–6)?

JACOB'S LADDER

(Gen 28:10–22)

YHVH's Plan of Salvation From Genesis to Revelation – The BIG Picture!

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(The following is excerpted from a much larger work of the same name found on our web site at www.hoshanarabbah.org)

The Jewish Rabbis teach that Jacob's ladder prophetically represents the Torah as a bridge from heaven to earth (*ArtScroll Stone Edition Chumash*, p. 145). This is also true of Yeshua, who was the Word or Torah of Elohim revealed to man in flesh form (John 1:1–14,51). Yeshua came to reveal the way of salvation leading to eternal life and to the Father in heaven. He was/is the Way of Salvation, the Source of Eternal Life, the One who redeems man from his sin reconciling him to the Father through his body that was crucified, then resurrected. The Apostolic Scriptures reveal that spiritually Yeshua is like a body: his head is in heaven and his feet are planted like a tree of life on earth. Men must come up through him in order to obtain a place in YHVH's spiritual or heavenly kingdom.

A ladder is a picture of a Torah scroll. A ladder actually resembles a Torah scroll. Both have two side posts and center horizontal crosspieces (in the case of a ladder) or horizontal writing (in the case of a scroll). YHVH's Torah or Word is a source of life, while a ladder is likened to a tree. In John 1:51, Yeshua likens himself to a spiritual ladder, and in John 1:1 and 14 says that he was the Word of Elohim made flesh; that is, he was both the

Written Torah and the Living Torah. He hung on a tree and he is the tree of life (John 15:5). So we see from the preceding abbreviated discussion that these concepts can be set up like a mathematical equation:

Jacob's ladder = a tree = Torah = the Word of YHVH = Yeshua = Yeshua on the cross = eternal life = the way to the Father in heaven = a Torah scroll

It is interesting to note that the spindles of a Torah Scroll are referred to by the Jewish rabbis as *atzei chaim*, or as "trees of life" (*ArtScroll Kestenbaum Edition Tikkun*, under "Laws and Custom," p. 737a).

Furthermore, we see that the pages of a book are often referred to as *leaves*, or *folios*, which is related to the word *foliage*, which comes from the French word for leaves (i.e., *feuilles*). In a Torah scroll, folios, or pages of lamb-skin are sown together to make one long, continuous scroll. This should further help us to understand the relationship in Hebraic thinking between Jacob's ladder and the Tree of Life as it relates to the Torah, a Torah scroll and Yeshua the Messiah who is the Torah of Elohim made flesh.

At this point let us again recall the words of Yeshua in John 1:51,

Truly, truly, I say unto you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of Elohim ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.

The ladder to heaven = a Torah scroll = the Word of YHVH made flesh = the Living Torah = Yeshua

Now let's read the text under consideration with the meanings of the words and the expanded concepts in mind:

10 And Jacob went out from **Beersheba**, and went toward **Haran**. 11 And he encountered/interceded/prayed at **the place** [Mount Moriah/the Temple Mount], and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took of the **stones** [the Two Stone Tablets, the two houses of Israel (discussed below)] of **the place** [Mount Moriah/the Temple Mount] which he arranged around his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12 And he dreamed, and behold a **ladder** [literally a highway to heaven, a staircase, a ramp up to the altar, a Torah scroll, or a tree] **set up** [set up, put, place, stand firmly, fix, establish, to be planted] on the **earth** [*eretz*/the Land of Israel], and the **top** [*rosh*/head, beginning, captain, chief, first, height, highest part] of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of Elohim ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, YHVH stood above it, and said, I am YHVH, Elohim of Abraham your father, and the Elohim of Isaac: the ground upon which you are lying, to you will I give it, and to your seed/descendants [the offspring of Jacob/Israel, namely, the twelve tribes of Israel, later split into two kingdoms: the House of Judah (the Southern Kingdom) and the House of Israel/Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom)]; 14 And your seed/descendants shall be as the **dust** [scattered and degraded like dirt throughout the nations] of the earth, and you shall spread out powerfully to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in you and in your seed/descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed [speaking of redemption and salvation through Messiah son of Joseph (or *Mashiach Ben Yosef*), the Suffering Servant, a role Yeshua fulfilled]. 15 And, behold, I am with you, and will guard you in all places wherever you go, and will bring you again into this land [the Land of Israel, speaking prophetically of Jacob's descendants returning to the Promised Land (even as Jacob was doing in Gen 28 after a 22-year exile in virtual slavery and servitude to Lot) after a long dispersion/exile throughout the nations of the world]; for I will not forsake you, until I have done what I have spoken about you. 16 And Jacob awoke out of his sleep [the descendants of Jacob, the dispersed of both the Houses of Judah and of Ephraim have been sleeping for thousands of years spiritually with regard to their prophetic roles and identities and with regard to the Messiah, the Torah, their relationship to the covenants of Elohim and their relationship to one another], and he said, Surely YHVH is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other but the house of Elohim, and this is the **gate** [a picture of Messiah Yeshua, the Written and Living Torah-Word of Elohim and the Door to Salvation and the Father in Heaven] of heaven. 18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the **stone** [Yeshua, the Houses of Israel united

in Messiah: the Written and Living Torah's personified (more on this below)] that he placed around his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19 And he called the name of the place **Bethel** [at that exact spot about 1800 years later the Temple would be standing and Messiah Yeshua would be crucified]: but the name of that city was called Luz originally. 20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If Elohim will be with me, and will guard me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to wear, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall YHVH be my Elohim: 22 And this **stone** [singular, a reference to Yeshua, and to the one new man in Yeshua where there is no longer Jew nor non-Jew (Eph 2:11-19)], which I have set for a pillar, shall become a house of Elohim: and whatever you give me I shall repeatedly give a tenth/tithe to you. (emphasis added)

The entire article on the prophetic meaning of Jacob's ladder is available at Hoshana Rabbah's web site at the following link: <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/ladder.pdf>

HAFTORAH READING — HOSEA 12:13(12)-14:10(9)

Ephraim Left YHVH, But YHVH Never Left Ephraim, Who Will Return to YHVH

Hosea was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Samaria (the House of Ephraim) whose ministry call was to warn Ephraim of impending judgment if they failed to repent and turn from idolatry back to YHVH. His ministry lasted from around 770 to 726 B.C.—just prior to and at the beginning of Israel's captivity. YHVH's message through Hosea is one of a husband pleading for his wayward wife to return to him, warning of impending judgment and a message of hope for Israel's restoration. Even as Hosea redeemed his wife from the slavery of adultery, so YHVH will redeem his spiritual wife from her spiritual slavery and adultery.

- 1 **12:13(12)–15(14)**, Hosea was attempting to teach Ephraim some lessons from history in hopes that they would wake up and see their own plight in light of their own national history. Jacob was a mighty prince who thought that he could accomplish his destiny by his own strength and ability, yet YHVH had to humble him to bring him to a place of usefulness for his purposes. Jacob, in essence, became a poor and lowly slave and shepherd just to earn the money to get married. Jacob's descendants would endure similar humiliations at the hands of their enemies in order to humble them. Yet through it all, YHVH's faithfulness and love was unwavering. Does YHVH deal with us in the same manner? What lessons can we learn from this? These cycles and patterns are prophetic as to Ephraim's future destiny. Where is modern-day Ephraim in the scheme or cycle of things today? The *ArtScroll Chumash* says in its commentary on these verses, "Despite Israel's shortcomings, God says poignantly that he will never desert Ephraim, the wayward leader of the Ten Tribes. Like a spurned but still merciful Father, God confesses that he will not make a permanent end of Ephraim, because he has pledged that Israel will remain His people and because Israel is innately good and will eventually heed God's call to repent and resume its mission. When God will roar like a lion that the end has come, even Ephraim's children will rush to declare renewed allegiance to him" (p. 1139). What is really being said here? The Orthodox Jewish rabbis who wrote this commentary are speaking about Ephraim returning to YHVH to fulfill their mission in the *time of the end*. Discuss the implications of what they are saying.
- 2 Despite Ephraim's rebellion against YHVH, who like a spurned father or husband feels rejected, identify the passages in this Haftorah portion where YHVH, ever merciful and faithful to his covenantal promises, assures Ephraim of his love and of the fact he will not allow them to be utterly destroyed, but will redeem them.
- 3 What were the sins that Ephraim committed that provoked YHVH to anger? Identify those verses where Hosea discusses their sins. Their sin was primarily that of syncretism and worldliness. Discuss these terms and relate that to what you see going on around you in the church world today, and maybe even in your own life.

- 4 Ephraim thought that it was invincible in its sin, and that nothing would happen to it. Identify the warning signs that Hosea gives that had the people of Ephraim been attentive to them they should have awakened to the reality of their own spiritual destitution and their need to repent. Is YHVH giving warning signs to our nation, or to you personally, to do the same?
- 5 **14:1(2)–10(9)**, Discuss YHVH's desperate call to repentance. In verse four (three), we see Israel placing her trust in Assyria. In place of Assyria, put Babylon, and then relate this to the spiritual, economic and political Babylon, called Babylon the Great described in the Book of Revelation (chapters 13 and 18). Relate this to YHVH's call for *his people* to come out of Babylon (Rev 18:4); that is, to not place your trust in the Babylonish world system for security and protection. What spiritual lessons can we learn from this?

