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HADAR Children & Families
VOLUME 3 ISSUE 1

This issue is sponsored by the Friedman-Roth family

ה'-י"א כִּסְלֵו תשפ"ז November 15–21, 2026

מָה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- Yaakov runs away from Be'er Sheva and travels to the home of his uncle, Lavan.
- Yaakov dreams of a סֻלָּם (sulam, ladder) going up to the heavens with angels going up and down it.
- God tells Yaakov that his descendants will inherit אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן (Eretz Canaan, the Land of Canaan) and that God will protect him.
- Yaakov continues his journey until he encounters a well, where he meets Rahel, daughter of Lavan.
- Yaakov works as a shepherd for Lavan for seven years in exchange for marrying Rahel, but Lavan tricks Yaakov into marrying his older daughter, Leah, instead.
- Yaakov agrees to work for an additional seven years in exchange for marrying Rahel as well.
- Rahel and Leah, along with their servants Bilhah and Zilpah, give birth to 11 boys and one girl in total.
- Yaakov continues to work for sheep as payment, but says that Lavan hasn't treated him fairly, so Yaakov, Rahel, and Leah decide to return home to Eretz Canaan.
- When Lavan finds out that they've left, he chases after them, but God tells Lavan in a dream not to harm them. Yaakov and Lavan make an agreement to separate from each other.

מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash



When Yaakov meets Rahel for the first time, he cries (Bereishit 29:11). Why does he cry?

Bzzzz
A lot of midrashim are **bugged** by something unusual in the Torah text

Rashi offers an answer based on different midrashim.

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

Because he came empty-handed. He said, "Eliezer, my father's servant, had jewelry [when he came to this land to find Rivkah], but I have nothing with me!"

רש"י

שֶׁבָּא בְּיָדַיִם רֵיקָנִיּוֹת. אָמַר: אֱלִיעֶזֶר עֶבֶד אַבָּא הָיוּ בְּיָדוֹ נְזָמִים וּצְמִידִים, וַאֲנִי אֵין בְּיָדִי כְּלוּם.

- Can you imagine ever wanting so badly to give something to someone you love? What do you think it might feel like to really want to give to someone, but not be able to?
- What does this interpretation tell us about Yaakov's feelings for Rahel?



You might think that Yaakov was empty-handed because he left his home in a hurry. But Rashi suggests there's more to this story!

Elifaz, Esav's son, chased after Yaakov, because Elifaz's father Esav commanded him to kill Yaakov. But when Elifaz caught up with Yaakov, he hesitated, because he had been raised in Yitzhak's care.

Elifaz said to Yaakov, "What should I do about my father's command?!"

Yaakov said to him, "Take everything I have, because someone who has nothing is considered like someone who is dead."

לְפִי שֶׁרָדַף אֱלִיפַז בֶּן עֵשָׂו בְּמִצְוַת אָבִיו אַחֲרָיו לְהָרְגוֹ, וְהִשְׁיגוֹ, וּלְפִי שֶׁגָּדַל אֱלִיפַז בְּחֵיקוֹ שֶׁל יִצְחָק מָשַׁךְ יָדוֹ.

אָמַר לוֹ: מֶה אֶעֱשֶׂה לְצִוּוּיוֹ שֶׁל אַבָּא,

אָמַר לוֹ יַעֲקֹב: טֹל מָה שֶּׁבְּיָדִי, וְהֶעָנִי חָשׁוּב כְּמֵת.

By taking all of Yaakov's things, Elifaz could leave Yaakov alive but still sort of fulfill Esav's command to him and claim that Yaakov is "like someone who is dead."

- Elifaz is torn between trying to do what his father told him and not wanting to hurt his uncle. Can you think of a time that you felt torn between different obligations? How can you work out what to do in those moments?
- Why might the midrash suggest that "someone who has nothing is considered like someone who is dead"? What do you think this is supposed to teach us?



דִּקְדּוּק • Grammar

When Yaakov promises to give God back a tenth of whatever God gives him, he says: עַשֵּׂר אֲעַשְּׂרֶנּוּ לָךְ (aser a'asrenu lakh). The second word—אֲעַשְּׂרֶנּוּ (a'asrenu)—means "I will take a tenth of it." The first word—עַשֵּׂר (aser)—means just "to take a tenth" or "to tithe," and it is a simpler form of the same verb.



Why double the verb? Isn't that just saying the same thing twice?

Yes! Doing that is a kind of emphasis, where doubling the verb doubles its force. Here are a few ways you might translate it into English:

I will tithe, tithe it to You
I will tithe, yes, tithe it to You

In today's English, we might say something like, "I will really, really tithe it to You."

This kind of double verb actually happens quite a bit in the Torah. Can you think of other places you've seen it? The second paragraph of Shema, for example, starts וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמֹעַ תִּשְׁמְעוּ (ve-haya im shamoa tishme'u), which means something like, "If you listen, really listen (to My mitzvot)..."

- Can you think of a time where you or someone else repeated a word in a sentence in order to make your message clear?
- Why do you think Yaakov thought it was important to add this emphasis when making this promise to God?

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בּוֹאוּ נְדַבֵּר עַל זֶה • Tell Me More About This!

When Rahel wants children, the Torah tells us that she was jealous of Leah. Rashi (on Bereishit 30:1) says that Rahel was actually envious of Leah's good deeds.

Envy is usually harmful, and strongly discouraged in Judaism. One of the Ten Commandments is not to be envious! But can being envious of someone else's talents or achievements ever be a good thing?



According to the Talmud (Bava Batra 21a), the answer is yes!

There is a principle that קִנְאַת סוֹפְרִים תַּרְבֶּה חָכְמָה (the envy of scholars will increase wisdom). The idea is that if you are envious that another scholar is more learned than you, you will be motivated to work extra hard and be even better than them in the end. The result is that both of you are better because of your competition!

So in Rahel's case, maybe she could learn from this envy and it could motivate her to always be the best person she can be.

- What do you think? Can envy be a good thing? Have you ever experienced envy like that?



דַּקָּה שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate

Debate: Envy can motivate good behavior.

How to play:

Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!

For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.



Agree!

- We envy our role models and that inspires us to be like them.
- Everything can be healthy in moderation.



Disagree!

- Only with Torah! All other envy is unproductive.



שְׁאֵלוֹת הַשָּׁבוּעַ • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

aliyot:
1) Bereishit 28:10 to 28:22
2) 29:1 to 29:17
3) 29:18 to 30:13
4) 30:14 to 30:27
5) 30:28 to 31:16
6) 31:17 to 31:42
7) 31:43 to 31:55

haftarah: Hoshea 11:7 to 12:12 for Sefaradim and 12:13 to 14:10 for Ashkenazim

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.

Good luck!

1. What did Yaakov do with the rock that had been under his head while he slept?

2. Who kisses whom in this aliyah?



3. Who was Yaakov's fifth son, and who was that son's mother?

4. What is the name of Leah's youngest child?

5. What colors are mentioned?

6. What did Rahel steal?



7. What two Aramaic words appear in this aliyah?

8. Of the 12 children born in the parashah, how many does Yaakov name himself?

9. Two separate explanations are given for the name of one of Yaakov's children. Which child, and what are the explanations?

10. **Haftarah for Sefaradim:** Which of Yaakov's children and grandchildren are mentioned? **Haftarah for Ashkenazim:** What is tied up and hidden?



* Look for the answers on page 8!

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מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash

How far would you go to prevent someone from being embarrassed?

Bereishit 29:25

When morning came, it was Leah!

בראשית כט:כה

וַיְהִי בַבֹּקֶר וְהִנֵּה הִוא לֵאָה

Sometimes a bride wears a veil when she gets married, and it might be hard to see her face. Lavan tried to use that to trick Yaakov into marrying Leah, and it worked! This pasuk describes Yaakov's surprise when he wakes up the morning after his wedding and discovers that it was Leah, and not Rahel, that he married.

The Talmud suggests that this happened even after Rahel warned Yaakov that Lavan was a trickster.

Talmud Bavli Megillah 13b

Yaakov said to Rahel: What kind of trick might Lavan do?

She said: I have an older sister, and my father might not marry me off before she gets married. So Yaakov gave code words to Rahel, so he would know that it was really her.

When the wedding night arrived, Rahel said to herself: Now my sister will be embarrassed (if Yaakov asks for the code and she doesn't know it), so Rahel gave the code words to Leah.

תלמוד בבלי מסכת מגילה דף יג עמוד ב

אֲמַר לַהּ: וּמַאי רַמָּיוּתָא?

אֲמַרָה לֵיהּ: אִית לִי אֲחָתָא דְּקַשְׁישָׁא מִינַּאי וְלָא מַנְסֵיב לִי מִקַּמַּהּ. מְסַר לַהּ סִימָנִים.

כִּי מְטָא לֵילְיָא, אֲמַרָה: הַשְׁתָּא מִיכַּסְפָא אֲחָתַאי. מְסַרְתִּינְהוּ נִיהֲלַהּ.

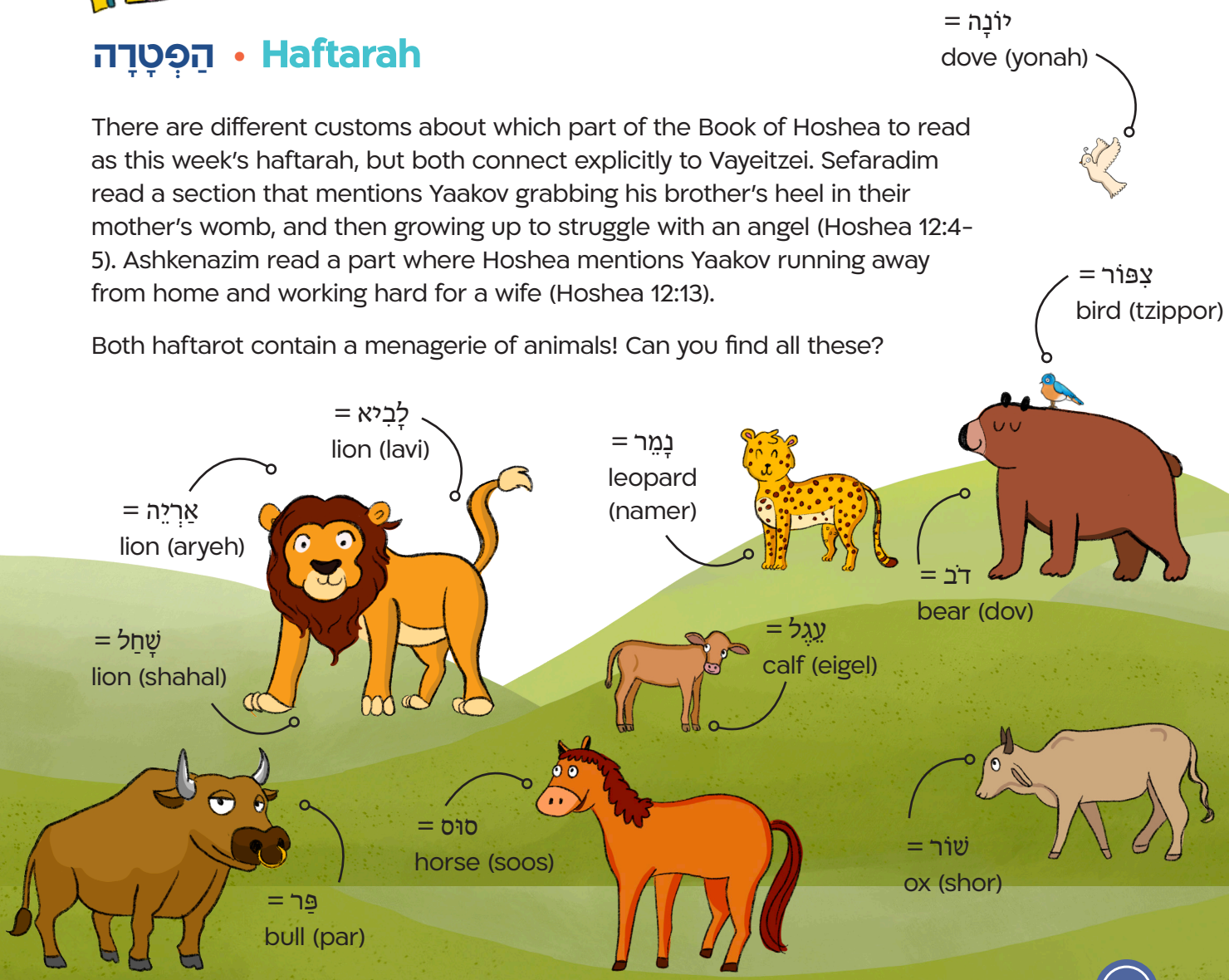


- If Rahel and Yaakov had a good solution to make sure Yaakov would know if Rahel was behind the veil or not, why would Rahel give away the code and let Leah marry Yaakov?
- If you were Leah, how would you have felt if Yaakov asked you for the secret code, thinking you were Rahel, and you didn't know it?
- What is the Talmud trying to teach us about the importance of making sure other people are not embarrassed? Why is this such an important value?
- Have you seen other people be embarrassed before? What can you do to help prevent that from happening?

הַפְּטָרָה • Haftarah

There are different customs about which part of the Book of Hoshea to read as this week's haftarah, but both connect explicitly to Vayeitzei. Sefaradim read a section that mentions Yaakov grabbing his brother's heel in their mother's womb, and then growing up to struggle with an angel (Hoshea 12:4-5). Ashkenazim read a part where Hoshea mentions Yaakov running away from home and working hard for a wife (Hoshea 12:13).

Both haftarot contain a menagerie of animals! Can you find all these?





מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash



What impact do people have on their surroundings?

Our parashah begins by saying that Yaakov left Beer Sheva and went toward Haran (Bereishit 28:10). Rashi asks: Why does the Torah mention the place that Yaakov left? Wouldn't it have been enough to just say that Yaakov was going to Haran?

Here's Rashi's answer, which comes from a midrash (Bereishit Rabbah 68:6):

TzaddikTown

Rashi (France, 1,000 years ago)

This tells us that the departure of a tzaddik (righteous person) makes an impact. When a tzaddik is in a city, the tzaddik is the glory, splendor, and beauty of that place. When the tzaddik leaves that place, the glory, splendor, and beauty depart as well.

רש"י

מַגִּיד שֶׁיְּצִיאַת צַדִּיק מִן הַמָּקוֹם עוֹשָׂה רֹשֶׁם, שֶׁבִּזְמַן שֶׁהַצַּדִּיק בָּעִיר, הוּא הוֹדָהּ הוּא זִיוָהּ הוּא הֲדָרָהּ; יָצָא מִשָּׁם, פָּנָה הוֹדָהּ פָּנָה זִיוָהּ פָּנָה הֲדָרָהּ.



According to this, the Torah stresses that Yaakov left Beer Sheva in order to teach us that it was very noticeable when he left. The town and the people there felt a big loss when he wasn't there anymore. That's because people feel a big difference when a righteous person is around.

- How do you affect the place where you are, or the people around you?
- What people make the world better when they're around you? For what people does it seem sad when they're not there?



Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. He set it up as a pillar and poured oil on it (28:18)
2. Yaakov kisses Rahel (29:10) and Lavan kisses Yaakov (29:13)
3. Dan son of Bilhah (30:5-6)
4. Dinah (30:21)
5. חוּם (hoom, brown) (30:32) and לָבָן (lavan, white) (30:35), which is also a person's name!
6. Her father's תְּרָפִים (terafim, idols) (31:19)
7. יְגַר שָׂהֲדוּתָא (Yegar Sahaduta), the name that Lavan gives the place he and Yaakov made their agreement (31:47)
8. None! (But Yaakov does name Binyamin in next week's parashah)
9. Yosef—אָסַף אֱלֹקִים אֶת חֶרְפָּתִי (God has taken away my disgrace; Bereishit 30:23) and יֹסֵף ה' לִי בֵּן אַחֵר (may God add another son for me; 30:24)
10. **Haftarah for Sefaradim:** Yehudah (Hoshea 12:1) and Ephrayim (11:8) **Haftarah for Ashkenazim:** Ephrayim's guilt and sin (13:12)