

Jacob's Discovery

GENESIS 27:42-29:30



GENESIS 27:42-28:1-10

Rebecca sent for her son Jacob. "Your brother Esau wants to kill you," Rebecca said. "Go to Haran, to the land of my brother Laban. Stay with him until Esau forgets what you have done." Later, Isaac said, "While you are in Haran, find a wife from among Laban's daughters." So Jacob set out for Haran.

GENESIS 28:11-16

As the sun was setting, Jacob stopped for the night. He placed a stone under his head for a pillow. That night he had a dream. In his dream he saw a ladder that stood on the ground and reached up into the heavens. Angels of God were going up and down the ladder. God stood beside Jacob and said, "I am God, the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac. I give this land to you and your descendants. They will spread out to the west and the east, to the north and the south. And remember, I will always be with you and your descendants, and I will protect you wherever you go." Jacob awoke and said, "God is in this place, but I did not know it!"

Think of a place that you consider special. What makes it special? How do you feel when you are there?



In This Place

בַּמְקוֹם הַזֶּה

A "wake-up call" reminds us of something important. It jolts us, opens our eyes, and shows us something that we had not noticed but was there all along. Jacob's dream was his wake-up call.

In Jacob's dream God reminded him that he was not alone—that God was with him. When he woke up, he realized that God had been *bamakom hazeh*, "in this place," all along. Jacob's dream was a wake-up call to remember that God was not only in this place, but in every place he might be.



GENESIS 29:1-6

Soon Jacob arrived in Haran, the place where his mother had been born. He stopped at a well and spoke to the shepherds there. Jacob asked them, "Do you know Laban the son of Nahor?" "Yes, we do," replied the shepherds. "There is his daughter Rachel now, coming with the flock."

GENESIS 29:10-13

Jacob drew water from the well for Rachel's sheep. He told Rachel that they were cousins. Rachel ran home to tell her father the news. Laban ran to greet his nephew. He hugged and kissed Jacob and took him to his home.

GENESIS 29:15-20

Laban had two daughters. The older one was Leah, and the younger one was Rachel. Jacob fell in love with Rachel. After Jacob had stayed in Haran for a month, Laban said, "You should not watch over my animals for nothing, just because we are family. How should I pay you?" Jacob answered, "I will work for you for seven years. Then allow me to marry your younger daughter Rachel." Laban said, "It is better that she should marry you than a stranger." So Jacob worked for seven years. But because of his love for Rachel, it seemed like only a few days.



A man and woman meeting at a well? Where have you read that before?

GENESIS 29:21-30

When it came time for the wedding, Laban made a feast. When evening came and Jacob was asleep, Laban brought his daughter Leah to Jacob's tent. When morning came, Jacob saw Leah and not Rachel! "What have you done to me?" Jacob asked Laban. "I was meant to marry Rachel! Why did you trick me?" Laban said, "It is not our custom for the younger daughter to marry before the older. You may marry Rachel as well, if you promise to work another seven years." Jacob promised, and he married Rachel one week later. Though he was married to both sisters, Jacob loved Rachel more than he loved Leah. And he worked for Laban another seven years.

How do you think Jacob felt at this moment?



During the bedeken ceremony, the groom lifts the bride's veil from her face. In this way, he avoids making the same mistake as Jacob!

This Just In!



Flashback! You're a reporter for the *Haran Gazette*. You're about to interview three of Haran's most famous citizens: Rachel, Leah, and Jacob. But first, you'll need questions to ask. For example, maybe you'll ask Leah how she feels about being part of Laban's trick. Write one question for each person.

To Rachel: _____

To Leah: _____

To Jacob: _____

Now, switch roles. Answer your questions as you think Rachel, Leah, and Jacob would have.

Rachel's Answer: _____

Leah's Answer: _____

Jacob's Answer: _____

Trick for Trick



Jacob wanted to marry Rachel but married Leah instead. How could this happen? Let's look for clues in this midrash:

Laban brought his daughter to Jacob's tent and said to Jacob, "Put out the lamp. My daughter is shy." That night, whenever Jacob said, "Rachel," Leah answered. But in the morning, Jacob saw it was Leah. "You tricked me," he said. Leah replied, "You were my teacher. Isaac, your father, called you 'Esau,' and you answered! I learned how to trick from you." (B'reisheet Rabbah 70:19)

When we're dishonest, we pay a price. People lose respect for us. They think twice before believing us again, or before telling us their secrets. Worst of all, we teach others to be dishonest. But dishonesty does not bring peace or justice. Instead, it creates more dishonesty.



When we're honest with one another, we build trust and strengthen friendships.

Honesty Maze

Find the trail to truth and become a trusted friend by completing the Honesty Maze below. Hint: If you come to an honest action, you're going the right way. If you come to a dishonest action, you've reached a dead end and must turn back.

