

29 NOVEMBER 2025 | 9 KISLEV 5786

VOLUME 39 | #12

DAF HASHAVUA

ויצא | VAYEITZEI

SHABBAT ENDS:

London: 4.49pm
 Birmingham: 4.53pm
 Bournemouth: 5.03pm
 Cardiff: 5.05pm
 Dublin: 5.08pm
 Edinburgh: 4.47pm
 Glasgow: 4.52pm
 Hull: 4.48pm
 Leeds: 4.47pm
 Liverpool: 4.58pm
 Manchester: 4.52pm
 Nottingham: 4.53pm
 Sheffield: 4.53pm
 Southend: 4.46pm
 Southport: 4.58pm
 Jerusalem: 5.15pm



Sponsored by JWA
to mark Jewish
Women's Aid
Shabbat



**JEWISH
WOMEN'S
AID**

**ויצא
VAYEITZEI**

**7th Sidra in:
בראשית
BEREISHIT**

**By Numbers:
148 VERSES
2,021 WORDS
7,512 LETTERS**

**Headlines:
BIRTH OF 11 OF
THE 12 TRIBES**

VAYEITZEI:
Artscroll p.144
Hertz p.106
Koren Sacks p.185
Soncino p.164

HAFTARAH:
Artscroll p.1140
Hertz p.118
Koren Sacks p.1433
Soncino p.188

Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – BEREISHIT 28:10-22

On Yaakov's (Jacob) journey to Charan, he falls asleep and dreams of a ladder resting on the ground and reaching up to heaven, with angels ascending and descending. God is at the top of the ladder, telling Yaakov that he will inherit the Land and that he will have plentiful offspring. Yaakov wakes up, having realised the holiness of the place, which is where the Temple would later be built (Rashi). He builds an altar and takes a vow committing to serve God fully (Ramban).

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 29:1-17

Yaakov travels eastwards. He sees a well in a field, covered by a large stone. The local shepherds tell Yaakov that the daughter of his uncle Lavan is approaching. Yaakov moves the boulder blocking the well and waters Rachel's flock. He kisses Rachel and weeps.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 29:18-30:13

Yaakov wants to marry Rachel, the younger sister of Leah, and offers to work for Lavan for seven years as payment. Although Lavan agrees, when the time comes, he tricks Yaakov, swapping Rachel for Leah. Lavan defends his actions and agrees to let Yaakov marry Rachel a week later, if he works for another seven years. Leah, unlike Rachel, is blessed with children: Reuven, Shimon, Levi and Yehuda. Rachel gives Yaakov her maidservant Bilhah to conceive 'on her behalf'. Bilhah gives birth to Dan and Naftali. Leah then gives Yaakov her maidservant Zilpah, who gives birth to Gad and Asher.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 30:14-27

Reuven finds some *dudaim* (jasmine – Rashi) in the field and brings them to his mother Leah. Rachel asks for some of the jasmine. Leah agrees, but only in return for the right to sleep that night with Yaakov. Leah conceives and has a fifth son,

Yissachar. This is followed by a sixth, Zevulun. She then has a daughter, Dinah. Rachel finally has a child, Yosef (Joseph). Yaakov demands that Lavan let him return home after all his years of work.

Point to Consider: *What is the connection between the birth of Yosef and Yaakov's demand to leave? (see Rashi to 30:25)*

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 30:28-31:16

Lavan asks Yaakov to stay on and to specify his payment. Yaakov replies that he will keep the plain-looking animals currently in the flock, and any offspring born to them with unusual-patterned skin. Yaakov becomes very prosperous. Lavan's sons accuse Yaakov of theft. God tells Yaakov to return to Cana'an immediately. Rachel and Leah agree to leave.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 31:17-42

Yaakov's entire family leaves. Lavan finds this out three days later and chases after Yaakov, catching up with him at Mount Gilad. God appears to Lavan in a dream, telling him not to harm Yaakov. Lavan criticises Yaakov for fleeing and for stealing his idols. Yaakov denies the latter charge, unaware that Rachel was hiding them. Yaakov also defends his record in Lavan's house, where he worked tirelessly, despite Lavan's trickery.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 31:43-32:3

Lavan proposes a peace treaty, which Yaakov agrees to, symbolised by a stone monument built by Yaakov's sons. Lavan and Yaakov part ways.

HAFTARAH (HOSEA 12:13-14:10)

The haftarah, according to the general United Synagogue custom, is taken from the Book of Hoshea. The prophet Hoshea rebukes the tribe of Ephraim for their rebelliousness, warning them of the dire consequences. However, they will ultimately return to God, Who will welcome them back.



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United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

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COVENANT AND CONVERSATION

HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN

This essay is adapted from a Covenant & Conversation essay last published in 2022, marking the recent 5th yearzeit of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l. Learn more from Rabbi Sacks at www.rabbisacks.org

Why Yaakov (Jacob)? That is the question we find ourselves asking repeatedly as we read through the stories in the book of Bereishit. Unlike Noach, Yaakov is not described as righteous, perfect in his generations, one who walked with God. Unlike Avraham, he did not leave his land, his birthplace, and his father's house in response to a Divine call. Unlike Yitzchak (Isaac), he did not offer himself up as a sacrifice. And he didn't appear to have the burning sense of justice and willingness to intervene that we see in Moshe (Moses) in his youth. Yet we are defined for all time as the descendants of Yaakov, *Bnei Yisrael*, the children of Israel. Hence the force of the question: Why Yaakov?

The answer, it seems to me, is found in the beginning of this week's *parasha*. Yaakov was in the middle of a journey from one danger to another. He had left home because Esav (Esau) had vowed to kill him when Yitzchak (their father) died. He was about to enter the household of his Uncle Lavan, which would itself present other dangers. Far from home, alone, he was at a point of maximum vulnerability. The sun set. Night fell. Yaakov lay

down to sleep and then saw the majestic vision of the angels climbing the ladder.

Nothing has prepared Yaakov for this encounter, a point emphasised in his own words when he says, "the Lord is in this place – and I did not know it!" The very verb used at the beginning of the passage, "He came upon a place," in Hebrew, *vayifga bamakom*, also means an unexpected encounter. Later, in rabbinic Hebrew, the word, *haMakom*, "the Place," came to mean "God." So, in a poetic way, the phrase *vayifga bamakom* could be read as, "Yaakov had an unexpected encounter with God."

Add to this Yaakov's late-night wrestling match with the angel in next week's *parasha* and we have an answer to our question. Yaakov is the man who has his deepest spiritual experiences alone, at night, in the face of danger and far from home. He is the man who meets God when he least expects to, when his mind is on other things, when he is in a state of fear, and possibly on the brink of despair.

Avraham gave Jews the courage to challenge the idols of the age. Yitzchak gave them the capacity for self-sacrifice. Moshe taught them to be passionate

“ God is holding us by the hand, sheltering us, lifting us when we fall, forgiving us when we fail, healing the wounds in our soul through the power of His love.”

fighters for justice. But Yaakov gave them the knowledge that precisely when you feel most alone, God is still with you, giving you the courage to hope and the strength to dream.

Sometimes our deepest spiritual experiences come when we least expect them, when we are closest to despair. We are at our point of maximum vulnerability – and it is when we are most fully open to God that God is most fully open to us. The most profound of all spiritual experiences, the core of all others, is the knowledge that we are not alone. God is holding us by the hand, sheltering us, lifting us when we fall, forgiving us when we fail, healing the wounds in our soul through the power of His love.



HELP US STOP THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

BY: **REBBETZEN JACQUELINE FELDMAN**

Bushy United Synagogue

There is something peaceful about standing at the edge of a lake and skimming stones across the surface - watching the ripples spread out in perfect circles, one after another. Each stone sends out waves that touch the water far beyond where it first lands. It is a small reminder that nothing happens in isolation; every action creates an impact that continues long after the initial moment.

This image lies at the heart of this year's Jewish Women's Aid Shabbat theme, Stop the Ripple.

When we talk about domestic abuse or sexual violence, we must recognise that the harm is never confined to one person. For every woman who experiences abuse, there are many others who are affected - children who witness it, family and friends who carry worry and fear, and communities that live with the silent shockwaves. The ripple spreads outward in painful and lasting ways.

But just as ripples can spread harm, they can also spread healing. Every act of compassion, every moment of listening, every conversation that breaks the silence can send out its own waves - of safety, understanding and hope. Together, we can stop the ripple of pain and replace it with ripples of kindness and care.

This week's *parasha*, Vayeitzei, offers a striking symbol of this transformation. When Yaakov

(Jacob) lies down to sleep alone and afraid, he surrounds his head with stones for protection. The *Midrash* tells us that the stones at first argued over who would rest beneath him, until they united and became one. In that moment of unity and safety, Yaakov dreams of a ladder reaching up to heaven, with angels ascending and descending - a vision of divine connection and protection.

Those stones could have remained separate - hard, cold and divided - but they came together to create shelter and peace. Their unity gave Yaakov strength and a sense of being watched over, even in his loneliness.

We can do the same. We can take what feels hard or painful - the "stones" of fear, silence or shame - and, through unity and compassion, build circles of protection around those who need it most. Jewish Women's Aid supports and empowers women and girls who are affected by domestic abuse by offering specialist advocacy support through practical and therapeutic services. But each of us has a part to play too.

This JWA Shabbat is a moment for our whole community to come together - to listen, to reflect, and to speak openly about domestic abuse. Around your Shabbat table, take a few minutes to start the conversation:

“ Every act of compassion, every moment of listening, every conversation that breaks the silence can send out its own waves - of safety, understanding and hope.”

How can we help stop the ripple of harm in our community?

What can we do to support those suffering in silence?

How can we ensure our homes are places of safety and love?

When we unite, like Yaakov's stones, we can protect, uplift, and heal. Together, we can stop the ripple and create waves of safety, dignity, and peace that reach far beyond ourselves.



DO YOU FEEL SAFE AT HOME?

את מרגישה לא בטוחה בבית?

No one should feel afraid of or controlled by someone close.

If this is happening to you, it is not your fault, and you are not alone.

Jewish Women's Aid is here to listen and support with respect and discretion.

You deserve to feel safe physically, emotionally and spiritually.

We provide:

- 🔹 Emotional and practical support
- 🔹 Counselling
- 🔹 Children's therapy and parental guidance
- 🔹 Access to legal and welfare support
- 🔹 A confidential helpline

WE ARE HERE FOR JEWISH WOMEN AND GIRLS.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.

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✉ advice@jwa.org.uk

Support services available nationally to Jewish women and girls 16+.

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SEFER YESHAYAHU (ISAIAH) – PART 2

A LACK OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

BY: **PNINA SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and US Educator

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) begins his career as a prophet during the reign of his cousin, Uzziah. King Uzziah was righteous and reigned as king of the southern kingdom of Yehuda (Judah) for 52 years. He successfully strengthened the borders of his country and defeated neighbouring enemies. At this time there was a truce between the two Jewish kingdoms - Yehuda and Yisrael. This is often called the "silver age" of Jewish monarchy, following the "golden age" of King Shlomo (Solomon). There was incredible potential during this generation to restore the glory of the Jewish people to what it had been during the times of David and Shlomo.

As mentioned in our article on *Sefer Melachim* (Kings) II, chapter 15, the prosperity, peace and stability of his reign led Uzziah to become haughty and arrogant. Unfortunately, the good times led the people as a whole to become greedy, hedonistic and corrupt. This was widespread, and can also be seen in the prophecies of Amos, a contemporary of Yeshayahu who prophesied in the northern kingdom of Yisrael. Amos references the people lying on "ivory beds" (*Amos* 6:4) and living in an "ivory palace" (*ibid.* 3:15), highlighting their wealth and prosperity. However, this wealth was not shared by all, and the prophets rebuked the people for

their lack of social justice.

Yeshayahu warns the people against the dangers of unrestrained monarchs. Early on, in chapter 2, Yeshayahu describes the monarchs as having too much silver, gold, horses and chariots (*Yeshayahu* 2:7-8). This is a direct reference to the laws in *Sefer Devarim* (17:16-17) restricting a king's ownership of these items.

The following verse, *Yeshayahu* 2:9 describes widespread idolatry. This represents the challenge of unrestricted wealth, which can lead people astray, causing them to forget the true source of their prosperity. How much more so is this a challenge for a powerful human king, who also needs to remember that everything ultimately comes from God.

The prophet continues to criticise the arrogant rulers of the day, warning them of the judgement that will come if they fail to change their ways. He describes a future period of anarchy without strong leadership (*ibid.* 3:4-6), which will come to pass when Uzziah loses control. Similarly, Yeshayahu predicts a future where the rich will be poor: "instead of perfume will be a rotten

stench; instead of sash, bandage" (*ibid.* 3:24).

Another important theme highlighted by Yeshayahu in these opening chapters is the need for social justice. Throughout *Tanach* (the Hebrew Bible), we are instructed to carry out *tzedek u'mishpat* (righteousness and justice). Yeshayahu urges the people to adhere to these values. His disappointment in the people is seen in a poetic word play (*ibid.* 5:7), where he declares that justice (*mishpat*) has instead become injustice (*mishpach*), whilst righteousness (*tzedakah*) has become cries of distress (*ze'akah*).



'The Woman at the Window' – an ivory artefact from Samaria

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT VAYEITZEI 28-29 NOVEMBER | 9 KISLEV

MANY VIEWS, ONE LADDER

BY: **THE TRIBE TEAM**

Two editors on a school paper often clashed. One pushed for sharp headlines and fast takes. The other wanted careful sourcing and slow, balanced pieces. After one heated week they tried a new rule. Each had to write the best version of the other’s view before arguing for their own. The next issue was their strongest yet. Their differences did not vanish. They became useful.

Vayetzei invites this way of thinking. Jacob enters a home where Leah and Rachel see life from different angles. The names they give their children record gratitude, hurt, longing and hope. It is not a simple household, yet

through that tension the House of Israel begins to form. Later in *Tanach* (the Hebrew Bible) those differences echo as Judah and Joseph, two outlooks that often pull in different directions. The Torah does not pretend disagreement is easy. It shows how God can use it to refine people and shape a future.

Our tradition values this kind of disagreement. The debates of Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai were fierce, yet they were called “disputes for the sake of heaven”. Hillel’s school spoke respectfully, presented the other position first, and only then offered its own. Truth grew through listening, not through volume.

For us today, the lesson is practical. Diversity of perspective

does not threaten faith or unity when held with humility. Hearing another view in good faith helps us find balance. We notice where our arguments are thin, where our language is unfair, and where fear is driving the conversation. That is how opinions become wiser rather than harder.

Prayer supports this work. *Shema* trains us to listen before we speak. The *Amidah* asks us to stand with presence before we choose words. Then we return to our conversations seeking clarity more than victory. Leah and Rachel teach that a house can face real differences and still build a future. When many views climb the same ladder of prayer and responsibility, truth becomes clearer and the family becomes stronger.

Parasha Wordsearch

Find these words in the grid. The words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

V	D	E	B	H	J	O	S	E	P	H	L	C
I	E	T	T	G	N	I	N	E	T	S	I	L
H	S	T	C	L	P	B	L	E	H	C	A	R
L	O	H	A	D	I	M	A	A	M	E	H	S
D	I	P	A	B	V	N	Y	L	O	C	D	X
T	T	N	E	M	E	R	G	A	S	I	D	
D	D	H	T	Z	M	D	Y	T	I	N	U	N
B	L	E	A	H	R	A	D	A	E	A	C	N
P	O	K	R	D	I	E	I	X	J	N	F	E
X	S	C	F	U	U	L	Y	T	R	U	T	H
U	V	V	A	Y	T	J	L	A	D	D	E	R
Z	U	H	V	J	U	C	E	R	N	O	H	
T	C	E	P	S	E	R	F	O	L	P	H	R

- LEAH

RACHEL

LADDER

DISAGREEMENT

HILLEL

SHAMMAI

SHEMA
- AMIDAH

UNITY

LISTENING

PRAYER

JACOB

JUDAH

JOSEPH
- BALANCE

RESPECT

TRUTH

DEBATE

FUTURE

HOPE





THE TRIBE SCRIBE

VAYEITZEI: BIG BUILD-UP!

REMEMBER, CLASS - EACH PAIR GETS ONE PACKET OF SPAGHETTI AND ONE BAG OF MARSHMALLOWS. AND THE TOWER MUST STAND UP ON ITS OWN!

STEM CHALLENGE
Build the tallest tower using only spaghetti and marshmallows

OURS IS GOING TO BE TALLER THAN BIG BEN!

So...

CHOMP!

WE CAN BUILD IT MUCH HIGHER IF WE DO IT SIDWAYS FIRST. THEN WE'LL STAND IT UP FOR THE BIG REVEAL!

SUPER STRATEGY ARI!

IT'S THE LEANING TOWER OF PASTA!

GREAT EFFORT, BUT EVEN PASTA TOWERS NEED A SOLID BASE! A STRONG FOUNDATION HELPS US BUILD MUCH HIGHER!

IN THIS WEEK'S PARASHA, WE READ ABOUT **YAAKOV'S (JACOB'S) LADDER** - STANDING FIRMLY ON THE GROUND BUT REACHING UP TO THE HEAVENS.

MAYBE NOT OUR MOST STRUCTURALLY SOUND STRATEGY.

KERRASHH!

LIKE **YAAKOV'S LADDER**, THE BEST WAY TO REACH GREAT HEIGHTS IS TO HAVE A STRONG, SOLID FOUNDATION. LOFTY DREAMS ARE WONDERFUL - BUT THEY NEED TO REST ON EVERYDAY GOODNESS. TURNS OUT, ARI, THE BEST WAY UP IS STAYING GROUNDED!



tribe
www.tribeuk.com

Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.