



Understanding the Parsha

Genesis 28:10-32:3

We will Learn how to

- 1) interpret the main theme (subject) of a Parsha (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) make thematic connections to that Parsha (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.

One Long Parsha!

This is a great Parsha! It's packed with information. Let's begin by noting that the Parsha begins in Genesis 28:10 and doesn't end until Genesis 32:3! If you have been studying with MBM, you know that this is full of meaning. **What is the meaning of all of the events that happen in this one Parsha?**

All of the events in this Parsha contribute to ONE primary † _____.

That's right. Although there are many other things happening in this story, we know that they are included in a single Parsha because they are part of an overall theme. Let's look for this theme now. Begin by making your general outline of the flow of events below.

Genesis 28:10-22 — Jacob's L _____.

Genesis 29:1-12 — Jacob meets R _____ at the W _____.

Genesis 29:13-35 — Jacob's marriage to L _____ and R _____.

Genesis 30:1-24 — The r _____ between Rachel and Leah.

Genesis 30:25-43 — Jacob's p _____.

Genesis 31:1-21 — Jacob's flight from L _____.

Genesis 31:22-42 — C _____ between Jacob and Lavan.

Genesis 31:43-32:3 — C _____ between Jacob and Lavan.



Now let's do a thematic experiment. Read Genesis 28:10-22 and Genesis 31:45-32:3, comparing and contrasting them. Do you see any thematic connections between them?

Y _____, both passages mention the erection of a p _____ as a monument and both passages mention the visitation of a _____!

Hmm, that's interesting. What are the first and last events to happen in this Parsha?

In the first event (Genesis 28:10-12), angels V _____ Jacob and in the last event (Genesis 32:1-3),

angels V _____ Jacob!

Very, very interesting, eh? Now think hard. Without reading any more, what do you think is going on here? If you're thinking, "this Parsha may be a chiastic structure," then, You've Got It! Whenever you see two similar events happening at the beginning and ending of a passage, you can bet a chiastic structure is on hand. A chias-tic structure is a pattern organized like this, a story is divided into two halves. The themes of the first half of the text unit are repeated in the second half of the text unit in reverse order. Also, the first and second halves of the story usually point us to the most important part of the story, the central axis. There are probably hundreds of them in the Tanakh! It is a literary device the Holy One developed to help us understand the themes of His Eternal Word. Let's develop the chiastic structure below.

Read Genesis 28:10-12. Which verses are thematically related to this passage?

Genesis 31:45-32:3. They are related as follows:

In the earlier passage, Jacob is l _____ the Promised Land on his way to Charan. In the latter passage,

he is l _____ Charan to return to the Promised Land.

In the earlier passage, Jacob saw a _____ ascending and descending upon a

ladder. In the latter passage, a _____ encountered him.



Read Genesis 28:13-22. Which verses are thematically related to this passage?

Genesis 31:43-32:3. They are related as follows:

The earlier passage records an a agreement between Jacob and the Holy One.

The latter passage records an a agreement agreement between Jacob and Lavan.

In the earlier passage, Jacob erects a m monument in response to YHVH's promises to him.

In the latter passage, Jacob erects a m monument in response to Lavan's promises to him.

Read Genesis 29:1-35. Which verses are thematically related to this passage?

Genesis 31:1-42. They are related as follows:

In the earlier passage, Jacob works 14 years for Rachel and Leah.

In the latter passage, Jacob recounts his 14 years of labor for Rachel and Leah.

In the earlier passage, Jacob is d deceived so that he doesn't get Rachel whom he wanted.

In the latter passage, Lavan is d deceived so that he doesn't find his gods on Rachel, who had taken them.

In the earlier passage, Lavan invited Jacob to set his w wages for work.

In the latter passage, Jacob recounts how Lavan changed his w wages very often.

In the earlier passage, Jacob's seven years of labor for Rachel seemed very e easy.

In the latter passage, Jacob recounts his toils under Lavan's hand as very c cruel.

Read Genesis 30:1-21. Which verses are thematically related to this passage?

Genesis 30:25-43. They are related as follows:

In the earlier passage, Leah realized that she was b blessed with another child because she gave her

maidservant to Jacob. In the latter passage, Lavan realized that he was

b blessed blessed because of Jacob.

In the earlier passage, Leah believes that Jacob will s stay with her

forever. In the latter passage, Lavan wants Jacob to s stay with him.

In the earlier passage, Leah c conceives a child because of the

mandrakes she paid to Rachel. In the latter passage, Jacob used rods to

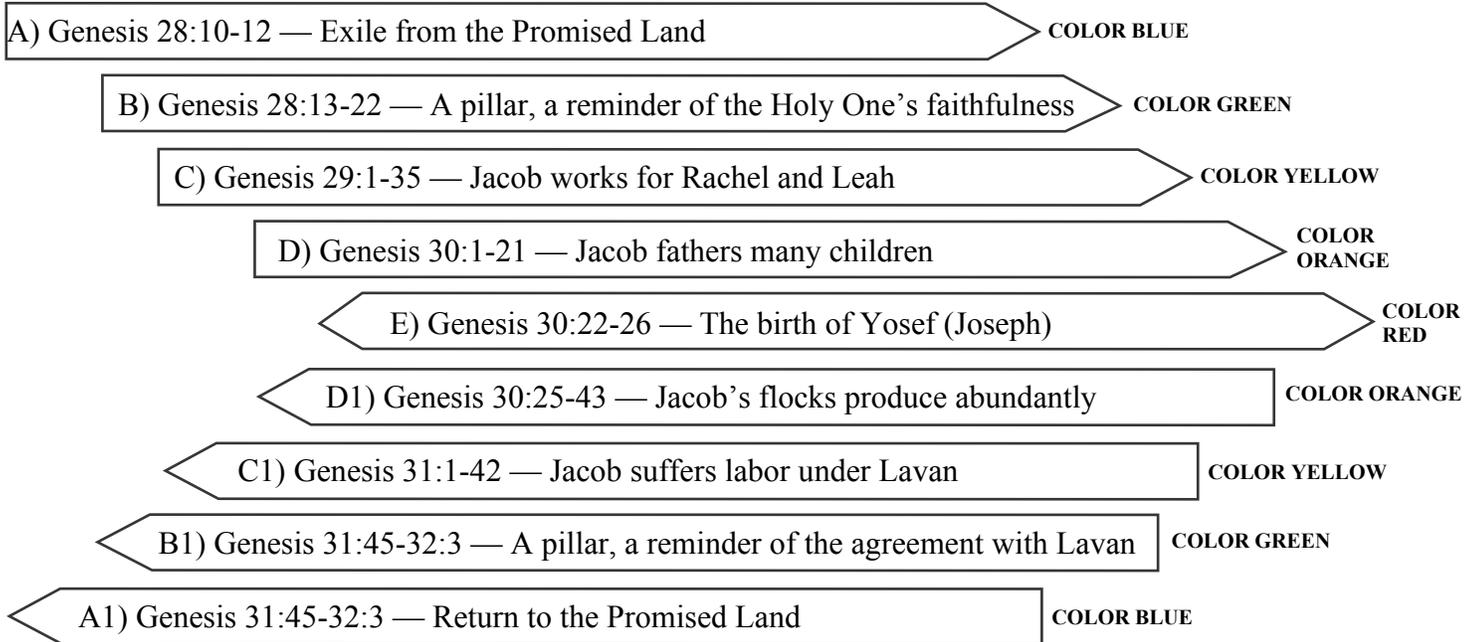
make his livestock more f fertile.



In the earlier passage, Jacob **f** אֶתְּחַלֵּק one child after another.

In the latter passage, Jacob's livestock **p** אֶתְּחַלֵּק one kid after another.

**Read Genesis 30:22-26. These verses appear to be the central axis!!!
Let's color code the chiastic structure that we have uncovered.**



Absolutely beautiful! Only the Holy One could pull this off so consistently. In fact, there are other chiastic structures within this larger one!

Now for the big question. What is the one theme that unites all the stories in this Parsha?

The theme of **e** אֶתְּחַלֵּק and **r** אֶתְּחַלֵּק.

That's right! This is the essence of this Parsha. It begins with exile from Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel) and ends with a return to the land. Later, we will see why the birth of Joseph is the central axis of the story of exile and redemption. Oh boy! I can't wait! ?

Find the hidden words for this weeks Parsha

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



LAND
 EXILE
 LAVAN
 LEAH
 RACHEL
 JACOB
 CHILDREN
 PILLAR
 YHVH