**Questions for Understanding and Reflection**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat which verse or verses impressed your heart and fired your imagination?

Ramban’s commentary on the Idols that Yaaqob hid: An idol and the things that pertain to it are not in the category of objects that require burial and for which burial ‎suffices, but instead they are to be crumbled up and scattered to the wind or thrown into the sea.[[1]](#footnote-1) It appears to me that the sons of Jacob ‎did not take the idols and the things that pertain to them from Shechem until they had been nullified and had thus become permissible to them, ‎for a heathen can nullify an idol against its worshipper's will,[[2]](#footnote-2) thus making it permissible to them. Jacob, however, for the sake of the purity ‎of holy things, commanded that they remove it so that they should be fit to worship God and sacrifice before Him, just as He had commanded ‎them concerning immersion and the changing of garments.[[3]](#footnote-3) Burial was thus sufficient for the idols, and therefore *he hid them under the ‎terebinth* in a location which will neither be tilled nor ‎sown.

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 33:18?

**And Jacob came safely** – How is this to be understood?

**the city of Shechem** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: עִיר?

**when he came from Padan-aram** – What is being conveyed by this pasuk?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 33:20?

**and he named it, “God is the God of Israel.”** – How can an altar be called “God”?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 34:1?

**the daughter of Leah** - And not the daughter of Jacob?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 34:7?

**and such ought not to be done** – What ought not to be done?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 34:13?

**with cunning** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: בְּמִרְמָה?

**because [after all] he had defiled** – I sthis trickery?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 34:21?

**These men are peaceful with us** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: שְׁלֵמִים?

**and the land-behold it is spacious enough** – What is this metaphor?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 34:25?

**Jacob’s two sons** – Were they not his two sons?

**Dinah’s brothers** – Why are they alone called “Dinah’s brothers”?

**with confidence** – Why did they have confidence?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 35:1?

**Arise and go up** – Why is this command juxtaposed with the story of Dinah?

1. What questions were asked of Rashi regarding Gen. 35:8?

**And Deborah...died** - What connection does Deborah have with Jacob’s household?

**beneath Beth-el** – How is one buried beneath a city (contamination?)?

**beneath the plain** – How is one buried beneath the plain?

1. According to the Ramban what is one of the names of the Messiah? And how is this name related to Exodus 23:21?

“The Eternal is our righteousness”. Shemot 23:21 teaches us that the angel that led them through the wilderness was Mashiach because they share the same name.

1. According to the Ramban what is the meaning of Ya’aqob’s statement: ‎”You are the G-d of those on high, and I am the master of those down below”‎?

The Sages thereby ‎alluded to that which they constantly say: the likeness of Jacob is engraved in the Heavenly Throne.[[4]](#footnote-4) The intent [of Jacob's statement ‎quoted in the Midrash - "I am the master of those down below"] - is that the Divine Glory rests in the Land of Israel.

Israel will be the “kingdom of priests” and the governors to the world.

1. According to our Sages what secret is encapsulated in the name “Alon-Bachut”?

“Alon-Bachut” = ”two weepings” - Jacob wept and mourned for his righteous/generous mother who had loved him ‎and sent him to Paddan-aram ‎and who was not privileged to see him when he returned.

1. Why do the Scriptures do not mention the passing away of Rebekah?

Rebekah's death lacked honor, for Jacob was not there, and Esau hated her and would not attend; Isaac's ‎eyes were too dim to see,[[5]](#footnote-5) and he did not leave his house. Therefore, Scripture did not want to mention that she was buried by the Hittites.

In Eileh HaDevarim Rabba,[[6]](#footnote-6) in the section of Ki Theitzei LaMilchamah,[[7]](#footnote-7) where the Sages say: ‎‎"You find that when Rebekah died, people said, 'Who shall go before her? Abraham is dead. Isaac is confined to the house and his eyes are ‎dim. Jacob is gone to Paddan-aram. If wicked Esau ‎shall go before her, people will say, "Cursed be the breast that gave suck to this one.' " What did they do? They took out her bier at night. Rabbi ‎Yosei bar Chaninah said, 'Due to the fact that they took out her bier at night the Scriptures mentioned her death only indirectly.

1. His Honor Rosh Paqid Adon Hillel makes the following statement: “When you think about it, all that Mashiach boils down to, in the end, is helping Ya’aqob leave behind all ‎connections to Esav once and for all, so that he can finally take his right plac‎e as Israel.” What are some of the practical implications of this statement?
2. Not being associated with our “brothers” who are evil doers that lead us into sin.
3. Leaving behind our yetzer HaRa so that we are no longer tempted to do evil.
4. Do not forsake the renewing of your mind which comes from the Torah. To depart from Esau means that we do what the Torah commands.
5. Why do “the Arabs sense that their life-force comes from the Jews’ holy sites”? And are they correct in thinking so.

They sense it because it comes from HaShem who says that the righteous sustain the world and it is the merit of our ancestors that sustain us when we, or the Arabs, have no other merits.

They think that these places have something that emanates for them, rather than seeing the righteousness of the one buried there.

1. What important assertion does Rashi makes in Nahum 1:4 and how does this relate to Isaiah 17:12, and Rev. 17:1?

The sea is a figure describing the nations, who are compared to water, as the matter is stated (Isa. 17:12): “Like the rushing of mighty waters they rush."

The Gentiles will perish because they rush headlong into the world without any thought of their Creator and their obligations to Him.

**Isaiah 17:12** Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!

**Revelation 17:1** And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

1. What do our Sages mean when they say “Sleep is one-sixtieth part of death”?

It means that sleep is just a *taste* that is sufficient to teach us the nature of death and prophecy.

1. What is it meant by the statement: “Neither the congregation nor the Talmid grows unless the Hakham strikes it telling it to grow‎"? And what are some of its practical implications?

It means that it is the Hakham’s responsibility to wake up his congregation and help them to grow. It means that there is no growth without an Hakham.

1. ‎Taking into consideration all the readings for this Shabbat what is the prophetic statement for this ‎week?‎

Pay attention to the Hakhamim who are sent by HaShem to help us grow.

1. Abodah Zarah 43b. And if so, why did Jacob bury the idols when they should have been destroyed? [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., 52b. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Verse 2 here. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Tanchuma Numbers 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Above, 27:1. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. I found this not in Midrash Rabbah but in Tanchuma Ki Theitzei, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Deuteronomy 21:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)