Chomer Lidrush

Some ideas to turn your gears heading into Parshas Vayeitzei.

Parperet: Back to His Place

"*Vayashav Lavan limkomo. V'Yaakov halach l'darko, vayifge'u vo malachei Elokim*" (32:1-2). The *Meshech Chochmah* reads Lavan's quiet exit as a verdict on his whole life. A man who had a holy person like Yaakov living in his home for twenty years should have absorbed something of his ways and wisdom, as "*holech es chachamim yechkam*" (Mishlei 13:20). Instead, the moment Yaakov left, Lavan "returned to his place," to the same deceit and love of money as before.

R' Immanuel Bernstein, presenting this piece in *From the World of the Meshech Chochmah*, puts it sharply: watching Lavan arrive home that day, you would never guess Yaakov had been there at all. Yaakov, by contrast, "went on his way," because a true *talmid chacham* never stays where he started; as Chazal say, *talmidei chachamim* have no rest in this world or the next, rising higher each day. And at once, angels came to meet him. At the end of any season spent close to greatness, the question is whether we went back to our place or went on our way.