

**"Are we not considered by him as strangers for he has sold us, and he has been using up the money given for us."
(31:15)**

This conversation between Yaakov, Rachel and Leah seems rather strange and requires close study. When Yaakov informs his wives of Hashem's command to leave Lavan's home, he begins with a long explanation that Lavan no longer favored him and has cheated him many times. Only afterwards, does he tell them that it is Hashem's command that they leave. Equally perplexing is Rachel and Leah's response. Although they agreed with Yaakov they base their reasoning on the fact that Lavan is wicked and they will not inherit anything from him anyway. Is this the way to respond to Hashem's command? They should have said that they are willing to leave since this is Hashem's command, without stating any other reason!

From this we learn an important principle regarding our approach to serving Hashem. We should not imagine that if we serve Hashem, we will inevitably endure great suffering, and not lead an enjoyable life. But it is still worthwhile because we will enjoy the reward of the world to come. This is fallacious reasoning. Man is obliged to reflect carefully and discover that if he fulfills Hashem's *mitzvos*, he will be blessed and will have enjoyment in this world. The observance of *Torah* should be a source of joy and excitement to us, since its observance entails no evil at any time. Therefore, Rachel and Leah told Yaakov that they were not foregoing any pleasure by leaving, but rather that it was only to their advantage. They sensed that Hashem's imperative was not only good for them, but it was the only way to live properly.