

א שטיקל תורה A LITTLE SLICE OF TORAH

פון פרשת דער וואָך FROM THE WEEKLY PORTION

November 18, 2023



בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מִלֶּךְדָּ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְעֲסוֹק בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה:

“Tachometer Torah”



...read down to the red line

Parashat-haShavu'a Stats

Weekly Portion: Tol'dot

Consists of: asdads

Sequence—

in annual Torah cycle: 6th of 54

in Genesis: 6th of 12

- A Salient Selection from the Portion -

Genesis 25:21-34

Context: *Genesis, first of the Five Books of the Torah, is an outline of the Creation of the physical universe; a description of the origin of the human family by their respective nations; and an account of Abraham's and Sarah's lineage through their grandson Jacob as the founder of the Israelite people.*

Content: *Chapter 21 established a narrative theme in Israelite society, whereby primacy does not necessarily go to the first-born. In that chapter, Sarah's surrogate son Ishmael is side-tracked as a teenager to leave the field clear for her own infant son Isaac. Now, a generation later, Isaac's first-born Eisav is in turn subordinated to his younger twin brother, Jacob.*

Both Ishmael and Eisav are blessed, by virtue of being Abraham's progeny (see 21:18), becoming the founders of great and mighty nations: respectively, the desert Arabs and the Edomites. And, not surprisingly, both those nations are bitter towards— and sporadically inimical to— their Israelite cousins.

[25:21] - Isaac pleaded with The Eternal One on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and The Eternal One responded to his plea, and his wife Rebekah conceived. [25:22] - But the children struggled in her womb, and she said, “If so, why do I exist?” She went to inquire of The Eternal One.

25:23] - At which The Eternal One answered her:

Two nations are in your womb;

two peoples shall issue from your body.

One people shall be mightier than the other,

yet **the older shall serve the younger.**”

25:24] - When her time to give birth was at hand, there were in fact twins in her womb.

וַיִּעֲתָר וַיִּצְחַק לַיהוָה לֵנֶכַח אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי
עָקְרָה הוּא וַיִּעֲתָר לוֹ יְהוָה וַתִּהְרָה
רֵבֶקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּתְרַצְצוּ הַבָּנִים
בְּקֶרְבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם כֵּן לָמָּה זֶה
אֲנֹכִי וַתֵּלֶךְ לִדְרֹשׁ אֶת יְהוָה

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לָהּ שְׁנֵי גוֹיִם בְּבֶטְנֶךָ
וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֶּעֶיךָ יִפְרְדוּ וּלְאִם
מִלְּאִם יִאֶמֶץ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר

וַיִּמְלְאוּ יָמֶיהָ לָלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמִם
בְּבֶטְנָהּ

- more over

25:25] - The first one emerged **reddish** all over, like a hairy mantle; so they named him Eisav. [25:26] - Then his brother emerged, holding on to the heel of Eisav; so they named him Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

25:27] - When the boys grew up, Eisav became a skillful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob became a mild man, raising livestock. [25:28] - Isaac favored Eisav because he had a taste for game; but Rebekah favored Jacob.

25:29] - One day, while Jacob was cooking up a stew, Eisav came in from afield, weary. [25:30] - And Eisav said to Jacob, “Pour me out some of that **red, red** stuff, I’m famished” (which is why he was named **Edom** [“red”]). [25:31] - Jacob replied: “First sell me your birthright.” [25:32] - And Eisav said, “I am about to die, so of what use is my birthright to me?” [25:33a] - But Jacob said, “Swear it to me this day!”

25:33b] - So he swore to him, and thereby sold his birthright to Jacob. [25:34] - Whereupon Jacob gave Eisav bread and lentil stew. He ate; he drank; he rose; and he left went— **whereby did Eisav spurn the birthright.**

וַיֵּצֵא הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲדָמוֹנִי כֻּלּוֹ כְּאֹדָרֶת שֵׁעָר וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו וְאַחֲרָיו כֵּן יָצָא אָחִיו וַיִּדּוּ אַחֲזֵת בְּעֶקֶב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְחָק בֵּן שָׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֻדְתָּ אֹתָם

וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדָע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֲהָלִים וַיֶּאֱהָב יִצְחָק אֶת עֵשָׂו כִּי צִיד בְּפִיו וְרִבְקָה אֲהָבַת אֶת יַעֲקֹב

וַיִּזַּד יַעֲקֹב נָזִיד וַיָּבֵא עֵשָׂו מִן הַשָּׂדֵה וְהוּא עֵינָף וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל יַעֲקֹב הֲלִעִיטָנִי נָא מִן הָאֲדָם הָאֲדָם הִזֵּה כִּי עֵינָף אֲנֹכִי עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמוֹ אֲדָוִם וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכָּרָה כִּיֹּס אֶת בְּכֻרְתְּךָ לִי וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוּת וְלָמָּה זֶה לִי בְּכָרָה וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הַשְּׂבֻעָה לִי כִּיֹּס

וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת בְּכֻרְתּוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹב נָתַן לְעֵשָׂו לֶחֶם וַיִּנְזִיד עֲדָשִׁים וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתֵּי וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּבֹז עֵשָׂו אֶת הַבְּכֻרָה

וַיִּקַּח עֵשָׂו אֶת נָשָׁיו וְאֶת בָּנָיו וְאֶת בְּנֹתָיו וְאֶת כָּל נַפְשׁוֹת בֵּיתוֹ וְאֶת מִקְנֵהוּ וְאֶת כָּל בְּהֵמָתוֹ וְאֶת כָּל קִנְיָנוֹ אֲשֶׁר רָכַשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל אֶרֶץ מִפְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב אָחִיו

A) Genesis 36:6-9 - **c. 1700 BCE** Eisav took his wives; his sons and daughters; all the members of his household; his cattle and all his livestock; and all the property that he had acquired in the land of Canaan, and **went to another land because of his brother Jacob.**

כִּי הָיָה רְכוּשָׁם רַב מִשְׁבֵּת יַחְדָּו וְלֹא יָכְלָה אֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵיהֶם לְשֵׂאת אֹתָם מִפְּנֵי מִקְנֵיהֶם

For their possessions were too many for them to dwell together, so that the land of their sojourning could not support them because of scope of their livestock.

cf. Abraham and his nephew Lot in Genesis 13:5-11

וַיֵּשֶׁב עֵשָׂו בְּהַר שְׂעִיר עֵשָׂו הוּא אֲדָוִם וְאֵלֶּה תְּלֻדֹת עֵשָׂו אָבִי אֲדָוִם בְּהַר שְׂעִיר

So Eisav settled **in the hill country of Sei'ir** (Eisav being [father of the nation of] **Edom**). This, then, is the lineage of Eisav, ancestor of the **Edomites**, **in the hill country of Sei'ir.**

אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים בְּגִבּוֹל אַחֵיכֶם בְּנֵי עֵשָׂו הַיֹּשְׁבִים
בְּשֵׁעִיר

B) Deuteronomy 2:4-5, 2:12 - c. 1250 BCE You will be passing through the territory of your kin, **the descendants of Eisav, who are established in Sei'ir.**

וַיִּירָאוּ מִכֶּם וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד אֶל תִּתְגַּרוּ בָּם כִּי
לֹא אֶתֶן לָכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ עַד מְדֻרָּה כִּי רַגְלִי כִּי
יִרְשָׁה לְעֵשָׂו נְתַתִּי אֶת הַר שֵׁעִיר

Though they will be intimidated by you, be very careful not to provoke them—for I will not be giving you so much as one foot of their land; **I have given the hill country of Sei'ir as a possession to Eisav.**

וּבְשֵׁעִיר יֵשְׁבוּ הַחֹרִים לְפָנַי

Sei'ir was formerly inhabited by the Hurrians [Anatolian colonists taking up squatter's rights in uncontested desert land];

וּבְנֵי עֵשָׂו יִירְשׁוּם וַיִּשְׁמִידוּם מִפְּנֵיהֶם וַיֵּשְׁבוּ
תַּחְתָּם

but **the descendants of Eisav dispossessed them**, wiping them out and settling in their place.



C) II Samuel 8:13-14 -

c. 1040 BCE

וַיַּעַשׂ דָּוִד שָׁם בְּשִׁבּוֹ מֵהַכּוֹתוֹ אֶת
אֶרֶץ בְּגִיא מֶלַח שְׁמוֹנָה עָשָׂר
אֶלָּף

David's reputation was established upon his return from defeating Edom **in the Valley of Salt**, eighteen divisions in all.

וַיִּשֶׂם בְּאֶדוֹם נְצָבִים בְּכָל אֶדוֹם
שֵׁם נְצָבִים וַיְהִי כָּל אֶדוֹם עֲבָדִים
לְדָוִד

He stationed garrisons throughout the entire land of Edom; **all of Edom became a vassal of David.**

D) I Kings 11:15-16 -

וַיְהִי בַּהֲיוֹת דָּוִד אֶת אֶדוֹם בְּעֵלוֹת
יוֹאָב שֶׁר הַצָּבָא לְקַבֵּר אֶת
הַחֲלָלִים וַיֵּךְ כָּל זָכָר בְּאֶדוֹם

During David's campaign in Edom, his military commander Yo'av who had gone out to bury the slain put to death every male in Edom.

כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת חֳדָשִׁים יָשָׁב שָׁם יוֹאָב
וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד הַכְּרִית כָּל זָכָר
בְּאֶדוֹם

For Yo'av's Israelite military force remained there six months, **until he had wiped out every male in Edom.**

בְּיָמָיו פָּשַׁע אֶדוֹם מִתַּחַת יַד יְהוּדָה וַיִּמְלְכוּ עֲלֵיהֶם מֶלֶךְ

E) II Kings 8:20-22 - c. 850 BCE During [the reign of King YoRam of Jerusalem, who was distracted by Syrian aggression in the north of his kingdom, in the south] **the Edomites rebelled against the authority of Judah** and appointed their own king over themselves.

וַיַּעֲבֹר יוֹרָם צָעִירָה וְכָל הָרֶכֶב עִמּוֹ וַיְהִי הוּא קָם לִילָה וַיִּכֶּה אֶת אֶדוֹם
הַסָּבִיב אֵלָיו וְאֶת שָׂרֵי הָרֶכֶב

YoRam crossed over to Tzo'ar with all his chariotry, and made a night attack against the Edomites surrounding him and his chariot commanders.

וַיִּנָּס הָעַם לְאַהֲלָיו

But his troops broke and fled to their tents.

וַיִּפְשַׁע אֲדוֹם מִתַּחַת יַד יְהוּדָה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

Thereby did Edom fall away from Judah to the present day.



Edomite dancer figurine, c. 600 BCE

tribute left in the temple of Shaushka, goddess of fertility, war, and healing

unearthed in the Negev in 1986 at Horvat Qitmit, just south of Arad



586 BCE

F) Psalm 137:7 -

**זָכֹר יְהוָה לְבָנֵי אֲדוֹם
אֵת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם**

Bear remembrance, O Eternal One,
of **the people of Edom**

on the day Jerusalem [fell],

**הַאֲמָרִים עָרוּ עָרוּ
עַד הִיסוּד בָּהּ**

Who were declaring: “Strip her, strip her
down to her very foundations!”

G) Obadiah 1:10, 1:14 -

**מִחֲמַס אַחִיךָ יַעֲקֹב
תִּכְסָּף בּוֹשָׁה וְנִכְרַת לְעוֹלָם**

For the outrage to your brother Jacob,
disgrace shall engulf you, and you
shall perish forever.

**וְאַל תַּעֲמֹד עַל הַפְּרָק
לְהַכְרִית אֶת פְּלִיטָיו
וְאַל תִּסְגֵּר שְׂרִידָיו בְּיוֹם צָרָה**

You should not have **stood at the passes**
to cut down their fugitives;

You should not have betrayed those who
fled, on that day of their anguish!

H) I Maccabees 5:1-3, 5:65-66 -

164 BCE

καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἤκουσαν τὰ ἔθνη κυκλόθεν ὅτι ὠκοδομήθη τὸ θυσιαστήριον καὶ ἐνεκαινίσθη τὸ ἅγιασμα ὡς τὸ πρότερον καὶ ὠργίσθησαν σφόδρα καὶ ἐβουλεύσαντο τοῦ ἄρᾳ τὸ γένος Ἰακωβ τοὺς ὄντας ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν καὶ ἤρξαντο τοῦ θανατοῦν ἐν τῷ λαῷ καὶ ἐξαιρῆναι

**καὶ ἐπολέμει Ἰουδᾶς πρὸς τοὺς υἱοὺς
Ἡσαῦ ἐν τῇ Ἰδουμαίᾳ τὴν Ἀκραβαττήνην**

When **the surrounding nations** heard that the Altar had been rebuilt, and the Sanctuary restored to its former holiness, they became incensed. Resolving to destroy the descendants of Jacob living in their midst, they began to expel and murder our people.

**Judas warred against the descendants of
Eisav in Idumaea, in the region of Akrabat-**

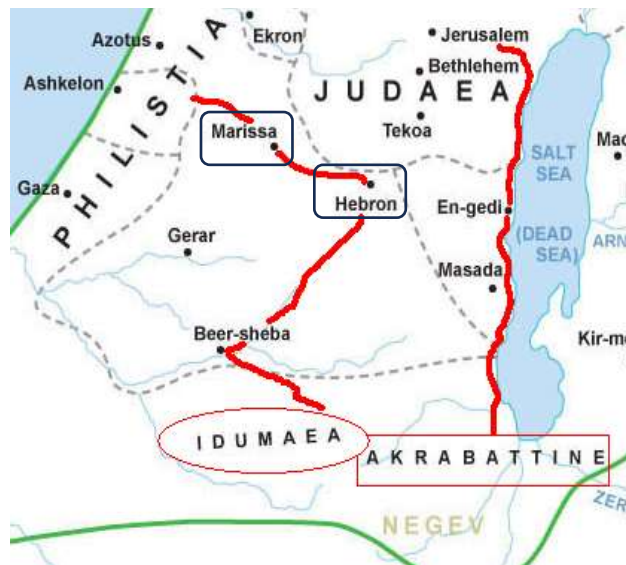
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ὅτι περιεκάθηγτο τὸν Ἰσραηλ καὶ ἐπάταξεν αὐτοὺς πληγὴν μεγάλην καὶ συνέστειλεν αὐτοὺς καὶ ἔλαβεν τὰ σκῦλα αὐτῶν

καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Ἰουδας καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπολέμουν τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἡσαυ ἐν τῇ γῆ τῇ πρὸς νότον καὶ ἐπάταξεν τὴν Χεβρων καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας αὐτῆς καὶ καθεῖλεν τὰ ὀχυρώματα αὐτῆς καὶ τοὺς πύργους αὐτῆς ἐνεπύρισεν κυκλόθεν καὶ ἀπῆρεν τοῦ πορευθῆναι εἰς γῆν ἀλλοφύλων καὶ διεπορεύετο τὴν Μαρισαν

tine where they were attacking Israel. He dealt them a serious blow, drove them off and despoiled them.

Judas then marched out with his brothers to depose the children of Eisav occupying the southern part of the country. He stormed Hebron and its dependent villages, throwing down its fortifications and burning down its encircling towers. Leaving there, he made for the country of the Philistines by passing through Marisa.



I) Josephus Flavius (37-105?), *Antiquities of the Jews* 13:9:1 - 112 BCE

Hycanus uero ciuitates idumeae, abora cum marisso cuntosque cum domuisset idumeos.

[After the death of Antiochus VII Euergetes, in the course of his nation-building campaigns the Hasmonean High Priest and King John] **Hyrca-nus** took Dora and Marisa, Idumean cities, and **subjugated all the Idumeans.**

Permisit eis prouinciam habitare si circumciderentur legibusque iudeicis uterentur.

He permitted them to remain in that country, provided that they were willing to circumcise their genitals and follow the Torah of the Judeans.

Qui desiderio patriae terrae, circumcisionem et aliam conuersationem iudaeorum pertulerunt ideoque ex illo tempore coeperunt esse iudaei

So desirous were they of remaining in the country of their forebears, that they submitted to circumcision and the other Jewish ways of living. **Wherefore, ever since that time they have simply been Jews.**

J) Jeffrey Rubenstein, “Herod’s Renovation of the Temple,” *The Gemara* (2017) -



Despite his official status as a Jewish descendant of converts, for the rabbis, Herod [the Great, 72-04 BCE] was not a Jew, but the archetypal Roman, who occupied Jewish land; imposed his values upon the populace by force; and ruthlessly killed his enemies.

Many of his Judean subjects thought of Herod as being in league with Rome, and the rabbis detested him, associating him with other unstable rulers whose cruelty would become the hallmark of their ruling governments, such as Caligula and Nero. The rabbis’ knowledge of Herod’s **Idumean ancestry made it natural to connect this “Roman” ruler— and, by extension, Romans in general— with the inimical people of Edom.**

רבי היה דורש הקול קול יעקב והידיים ידי עשו

K) Jerusalem Talmud, Ta’anit 68b - Yehudah HaNasi used to expound on the Torah verse “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Eisav” [Genesis 27:22]:

קולו של יעקב צווח ממה שעשו לו ידיו של עשו בביתר

The voice is the voice of Jacob, crying out because of what **the hands of Eisav did to him at Beitar** [the last stronghold of Judean independence in 135].

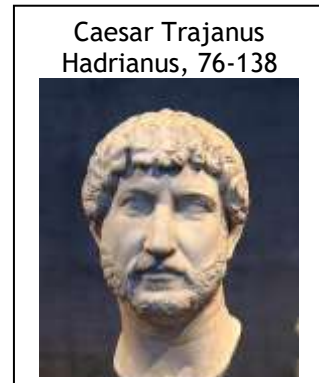
אנדריאנוס מלך אדום כיון שכבש את העולם כולו

L) Midrash Tanchuma, b’Reisheet 7 - **Hadrian, king of Edom**, having subdued the entire world [with the Fall of Beitar in 135],

הלך לו לרומי אמר לבני פלטרין שלו מבקש אני מכם

שתעשו אותי אלוה שהרי כבשתי את כל העולם

returned to Rome and told his officials: “since I have subdued the entire world, I want you to proclaim me a god.”



M) Tertullian of Carthage (155?–240), *Adversus Judaeos* 1:3-5 - God promised Rebekah that from her womb two peoples and two clans were about to come forth. They are, of course, the Jews— that is, Israel— and the Gentiles— that is, us— such that **the one who would come forth first from the womb would be subjected to the younger**— that is, the later.

And so, although the Jews are prior in time and older, and graced with being first in honor in relation to the Law, we are understood accurately as younger in the ages of time. This is so, as in the current era we have grasped the notion of Divine Compassion [by embracing the New Covenant of Salvation through Christ]. And there can be no question that, according to the decree of the Divine utterance [to Rebekah in Genesis 25:23], **the first— the elder people, namely, the Jews— inevitably will become servants to the younger, while the younger people— namely the Christians— will rise above the elder.**

In fact, our people— that is the later-arriving— having forsaken the idols to which previously we used to be devoted, were **converted to the same God from whom Israel departed.** Thereby did the Later people rise above the Earlier people, while **obtaining the grace of Divine honor from which Israel has been divorced.**

N) Abraham ibn-Ezra (1089-1164) on Isaiah 63:1 -

מִי זֶה בָּא מֵאֲדוֹם

Who is this coming up from [the land of] Edom,

חִמוּץ בְּגָדִים מִבֹּצְרָה

in blood-stained garments from Botzrah?

→ Second Crusade, 1147-1149

Pope Eugene III expands Holy War against the Abassids in Syria to a campaign against the Moors in Iberia, leading to the capture of Lisbon and Tortosa.

והטעם על הגזרה שגזר על אדום וזאת היא מלכות רומא וקוסטנטינא

This refers to the Divine indictment against Edom [for their destruction of Jerusalem and the Jews]— which is to say, **the empires of Rome and Constantine** [= the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches].

ונקראו אדומים בעבור שנכנסו בתורת אדום וזאת התורה נקראה על שם אדום שהאדומיים האמינו בתחילה בתורת האיש הידוע

And they are called “Edomites” because they joined with the principles of Edom, which doctrine is called “Edomite” because **the Idumeans were the first to believe in the doctrines of that well-known man** [= Jesus. cf. אותו האיש “that man” 48x in the Talmud].

תנא שלום נתן ב-שע"ו אותיות ושע"ו באותיות מלמד שכל הרודף שלום אין תפלתו חוזרת ריקם

O) Tractate Kallah Rabbati 3 [4th-6th centuries] - It is a teaching of the Mishnaic sages that the letters in the word *shalom* have the numerical value of 376, and the fact that the three letters corresponding to that number constitute the verb **שעו** *sha'av* [“plead for compassion”] teaches us that anyone who pursues peace, his prayer will never return unfulfilled.

אלא מעתה דכתיב **עשו הכי נמי דשלום הוא**

However, based on that, every time Scripture mentions [Jacob’s resentful and inimical older brother] **Eisav**[, whose name is also formed with those same three letters totaling 376], **does that indicate that he, too, was in fact inherently peaceable by nature?**

התם נמי אמ'

Yes, indeed— it means that in his case, as well.

ומה בשעה שכתוב בשמו שלום הוא מרעיש את המדינות מפני ועל חרבך תחיה **אם אינו כתוב עאכ"ו**

At the same time that “**peace**” is written into his name, in consequence of the blessing bestowed upon him— “you shall live by your sword” [Genesis 27:40] — he disrupts many nations. **Yet how much worse might it have been, were** [that magical number 376 representing “peace”] **not written into his name!**

אמר ליה אתינא לעלמא דאתי אמר ליה אין

P) Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 10b - [Caesar Antoninus Pius, reigned 138-161] asked [of Yehudah haNassi]: “Will I enter the World-to-Come?” He told him: “Indeed.”

אמר ליה והכתוב לא יהיה שריד לבית עשו

[But Caesar] said to him: “Yet is it not written in Scripture that ‘No one shall remain from **the House of Eisav**’ [Obadiah 1:18]?”

בעושה מעשה עשו

[To which the Rabbi responded: “That verse applies only to] **those who behave like Eisav.**”