



Ya'aqob's ladder

Parashat vayetze (7) – He went out

Torah: *B'reisheet* 28:10 to 32:2

Haftarah: *Hosh'e'a* 11:7 to 14:9

Apostolic Writings: *Mattithyahu* 3:13 to 4:11

Some people, including *Torah*-believers, claim that studying the *Torah* cycle for one year is sufficient to know the rules and institutes of *YAH* and prefer to teach themselves by following teachers, mainly self-appointed, on social media and other platforms. According to some, one year is enough and anything after that becomes boring. While this accusation may contain a very small amount of truth, we need to understand that no human being on earth will ever know all the mysteries contained in Scripture and nobody can claim to have answers to all the questions we have. *Torah* is the foundation and this is what *Yeshua* referred to more than any references he ever made to the prophets. The book of *D'varim* was his favourite source from which he quoted more than 20 times. What is good enough for *Yeshua*, should also be good enough for us.

Every *parashah* includes passages from the prophets and also the Apostolic Writings to compare the context between them and observe how Scripture actually proves itself. No two people will necessarily have the same understanding of a specific passage or verse, as each verse, chapter or book can be approached from 360 degrees. What we understand of a particular part of Scripture today, may be totally different from our understanding tomorrow, due to a different approach or as led by *Ruach HaQodesh*. This doesn't even include that dear old forgetfulness, especially after a year!

This is the main reason that each study starts with a supplication to ask *YAH* that we will be equipped by *Ruach HaQodesh* with the necessary perception to understand what we read. Only with a strong desire to make every word, even every letter of Scripture, part of ourselves, can we open the Handbook of Life to perceive events, circumstances and everything else the passages contain. One of the most important aspects we should never forget, is the time period in which everything takes place, linked to the traditions and customs of that time.

The events we study at present take place roughly 2 000 years after Creation, over a period of another 1 000 years. Everything that we read of happened at strange locations where most of us had probably never even visited. In fact, many of us are totally unfamiliar with most of these places, just like the culture, the

language, the way of life would be strange to what we are presently accustomed to. This is one of the reasons we sometimes have difficulty understanding, even believing, what we read in Scripture.

A good example, before we set off from the starting blocks: during the second *aliyah* we read of *Laban's* daughter, *Rahēl*, being a shepherdess. This teaches us that *Laban* is not wealthy, even though Scripture may infer it (30:30). All wealthy people would have shepherds appointed, paid to watch their flock, but those not wealthy enough would leave this task to their younger children, mainly the daughters. Compare this with *Dawid*, the youngest son of *Yishai*, who had to be called from his shepherding post when *Shemu'el* was to anoint him as king. Even though this may sound insignificant to some students, it clarifies other parts of Scripture when we have a better understanding of the background of that time.

In a while we will return to *Laban* and his family, but the most important of the 12 'smaller' prophets can give us some additional insight. The name *Hoshēa* translates as 'salvation' or 'redemption', like *Yeshua* of whom he prophesies. He lived during the eighth century before *Yeshua* (755-715 bY) and was a contemporary of *Yeshayahu* and *Mikah*. *Hoshēa* is well-known for the adulterous woman, *Gomer*, whom he had to marry as per the instruction of *YAH*. We also know that the names of their children were to have a direct relevance on the prophecies of the northern kingdom – the scattered tribes who would later be known as *Ephrayim*.

The message of *Hoshēa* is the only one where the life of a prophet's personal life also reflects his prophecies and warnings. We notice five cycles of judgement and restoration, a theme occurring repetitively: even though *YAH* judges sin, He will bring His nation back to Him. This nation, *Yisra'el*, lived in the same manner as the Christians of today, maybe even some people on the Way of Truth; they did whatever they liked, as if *YAH* didn't exist, until they encountered difficulties. This is where we start learning from the life of *Hoshēa*. His adulterous wife represents the apostate nation. In spite of her infidelity, *Hoshēa* wants her back, to which she obliges. With the name he is called, there is no better prophet to bring these warnings to the nation. One of the best known passages in Scripture is brought by this renowned prophet:

Hoshēa 4 ⁶“My people have perished for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being priest for Me. Since you have forgotten the *Torah* of your *Elohim*, I also forget your children.

In a similar fashion that parents punish their children because of misdemeanours, we need to be punished by *YAH* for our transgressions. We should be aware, however, that the purpose of punishment is not a qualification of the judgement passed, but a form of love in order to restore the offender. This moral restoration also includes that the offender will acknowledge the offence of his/her own free will, show remorse and return from his/her evil ways. Punishment is therefore healing and not retributive. Almost as a last resort, we see *Hoshēa* pleads with the nation:

Hoshēa 14 ¹O *Yisra'el*, return to יהוה your *Elohim*, for you have stumbled by your crookedness. ²Take words with you, and return to יהוה. Say to Him, “Take away all crookedness, and accept what is good, and we render the bulls of our lips.

This call seems to awaken the nation, as the end of the book shows us a synopsis of the prophecy where *Hoshēa* points out the correct lifestyle, both in judgement and blessing:

Hoshēa 14: ⁹Who is wise and understands these words, discerning and knows them? For the ways of יהוה are straight, and the righteous walk in them, but the transgressors stumble in them.

While *Hoshēa* shows the northern kingdom how their sinful lifestyle and dishonest actions bring them into trouble, he distinguishes this from the honest lifestyle of our ancestor, *Ya'aqob*, who was faithful to *YAH* in all he did, and how he prevails over all his enemies, both human and divine beings. This is where we need

to see what example is set for us, mainly considering our previous study, in which *Ya'aqob* is essentially shown as a rogue, extortioner, liar and deceiver. It is essential, however, that we need to rid ourselves of any human way of thinking and allow *Ruach HaQodesh* to guide us in the understanding that the methods of *YAH* do not work according to our standards. A verse that most of us has been acquainted with since childhood, immediately surfaces as *Sha'ul* describes it:

Romiyim 8 ²⁸ And we know that all *matters* work together for good to those who love *Elohim*, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.

Ya'aqob departs from his parents in *Be'ērsheba*, towards *Haran*, the place from where his mother, *Ribqah* was brought more than 80 years earlier. Once again we see minute detail in Scripture regarding an overnight stop, *הַמָּקוֹם* (*ha-maQom*), the [specific] place:

Berēshith 28 ¹¹ And he came upon a place and stopped over for the night, for the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. [emphasis added]

Scripture is explicit and uses a definitive adverb (that) twice, as well as an article (the) in the original Hebrew. Comparing sources, we learn that the city of *Luz* was close to mount *Moriyah*, where father *Yitshaq* would have been sacrificed and also where mother *Ribqah* would have made supplication for descendants. *Ya'aqob* has now travelled about 75 kilometers from *Be'ērsheba* to *Luz*. He is exhausted and doesn't even mind to use a rock as a pillow. While sleeping, he has an amazing dream: a ladder touching the ground and going directly into heaven, while messengers move up and down on it. Some translations such as the NIV, HCSB, HRB and a few others, render the original word incorrectly as 'stairway'. We will return here shortly. At the top of the ladder is *YAH*, reminding him of the promise made to both *Abraham* and *Yitshaq*, the same promise now also made to *Ya'aqob*:

Berēshith 28 ¹³ And see, *יהוה* stood above it and said, "I am *יהוה Elohim* of *Abraham* your father and the *Elohim* of *Yitshaq*. The land on which you are lying, I give it to you and your seed. ¹⁴ "And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall break forth to the west and to the east, to the north and the south. And all the clans of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your seed.

Keep in mind that *Ya'aqob* has a very close relationship with *YAH*, something which may make it easier to dream of heavenly beings. On its merits this could be a normal dream for anybody. We also know that most dreams sometimes contain strange elements, even circumstances which appear to be supernatural or impossible. We also see another first in Scripture: the way *YAH* communicates with ordinary people. We may talk of dreams and visions, but the messengers have been appointed to take the message from *YAH* to an individual. This takes place by means of a dream, even a thought, or what we sometimes also refer to "a voice". Now the question may arise: how do we talk to *YAH*? How do our supplications, our concerns or questions get to Him? The easy answer is: in the same way. This is why messengers move up and down, bringing down His message to us and taking our message up to Him. *Yohanan* experienced this while penning the revelation *Yeshua* told him about:

Hazon 8 ³ And another messenger came and stood at the slaughter-place, holding a golden censer, and much incense was given to him, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the set-apart ones upon the golden slaughter-place which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the set-apart ones, went up before *Elohim* from the hand of the messenger.

Another question emerges: why do the messengers need a ladder? Someone else has another question: what does the ladder signify? As usual, the answer is found in Scripture:

Yohanan 14 ⁶ *יהושע* said to him, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. [emphasis added]

Man's falling into sin divided heaven and earth. We need to realise that *YAH* can't be present where sin rules, therefore heaven and earth can no longer exist on the same level. In order for us to effect continuous fellowship between heaven and earth, we need a peculiar way of communication. *Yeshua* is the ladder leading us to *YAH*; he is the conduit for prayer. Stating it slightly differently, *Yeshua* is prayer. When we approach the throne of *YAH*, we do it through prayer, through *Yeshua*. It should be the way of every *talmid* to start or end a prayer in the name of *Yeshua*. This is also the reason we will find *Yeshua* on almost every page in the *TaNaKh*. The same way he is here with *Ya'aqob*, he will also be 400 years later at *Sinai*, amongst others. The Hebrew word סֻלָּם (*su-Lam*) translates as 'ladder' and not as 'stairway'. The Hebrew spelling for *Sinai* is סִינַי. Comparing the *gematria* of these two words, we find the following:

ס	ל	מ	=	י	נ	י	ס
40	30	60	130	10	50	10	60

This is one simple example of how *Yeshua* manifests in the *TaNaKh*. Augmenting on this example, we will later learn that the altar, a fairly high item outside the tabernacle, is reached by means of an incline, not steps, as the latter is prohibited (*cf. Sh'mot* 20:26). It therefore stands to reason that *Ya'aqob* didn't dream of a stairway, but of a ladder. *YAH* resides in heaven, and while we may build an altar on earth, the sacrifice is taken up to heaven by the messengers. We find *Yeshua* explaining to his *talmidim*:

Yohanan 1⁵¹ And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, from now on you shall see the heaven opened, and the messengers of *Elohim* ascending and descending upon the Son of *Adam*."

Ya'aqob considers this place to be the gate of heaven and in the morning he pours oil over the rock he used as a pillow, anoints it and names the place בֵּית אֵל (*ba-Yit El*), house of *El*. He also makes a promise, possibly more of a plea bargain: should *YAH* protect him and allow safe passage back to his own country, he will part with a tenth of all his possessions as a sacrifice. We can't help but notice the influence *Malkitsedeq* had had over grandfather *Abraham*, as well as the way *YAH* teaches us another concept.

Much less exhausted than the previous day, and now with a bounce in his step, *Ya'aqob* resumes his trip to *Haran*. The Hebrew text actually describes him literally lifting his feet – he walks fast! He gets to the same well the servant *Eli'ezer* stopped and met his mother, but there are a few differences:

- 🥂 we do not learn of *Ya'aqob* praying to *YAH* for the appointed wife;
- 🥂 *Ya'aqob* moves the large stone from the mouth of the well all by himself;
- 🥂 he kisses¹ this pretty, strange woman!
- 🥂 he weeps, mostly because of relief, gratefulness or excitement – something Scripture does not elaborate on, but still no homage is given to *YAH*.

Ya'aqob is certain that he has found his dream wife. Scripture also teaches us of three flocks of sheep in the vicinity, something we must not ignore. Each flock represents the monotheistic faith: Judaism, Islam and Christendom, although the latter is under heavy deception where the larger portion actually worship a pagan trinity. Everyone needs water, the source of life, but only *Ya'aqob*, who will later be known as *Yisra'el*, can remove the stone to allow Living Water to flow. As *Rah'el* approaches with the sheep, we see many believers, Christians included, following our youngest matriarch to become part of this covenant people, without the trinity. We should be very careful, however, not to exempt *Rah'el* and place her on the same level as the patriarchs of any of the prophets – she also needs guidance.

1 Kissing in the ANE was totally different to what we consider kissing in Western culture today.

As we saw earlier, *Laḅan* is not very wealthy and welcomes additional help in the person of *Ya'aqob*. Being greedy, he doesn't make a move for an entire month before asking *Ya'aqob* what he would expect in remuneration. Without thinking twice, *Ya'aqob* states that he will work seven years for *Raḥēl*. Having mainly lived in tents with his parents, doesn't mean that he didn't know how to tend flocks. We know that he managed to prepare two young goats by order of mother *Raḥēl* to receive the blessing from father *Yitshaq*. This man really loves *Raḥēl* and works fervently to be given her as wife. There are two issues that need to be cleared beforehand:

1. When we read of 'kiss' in Scripture, it is not necessarily the lips of two people making contact. When 'kiss' is used in ANE terms, it means resting one hand on the shoulder of the other, while first pressing the right cheeks and then the left cheeks together. It could also afterwards be followed by embracing each other.
2. *Yitshaq* could easily have earned three times more in the seven years from any other farmer and we can't help but emphasise the stinginess of *Laḅan*. More about this later.

The seven years pass quickly and for *Ya'aqob* it is like a few days. When the matrimony ceremony is announced, all farmers in the area are invited for celebrations. According to the apocrypha, *Laḅan* gave the 84-year old *Ya'aqob* a veiled bride and doused all the lights. As we have previously discussed, the marriage was to be consummated immediately after affirmation, while the guests enjoyed the refreshments and drinks. *Ya'aqob* realises the following morning, however, that his bride is *Lě'ah* and not *Raḥēl* and is highly troubled. Apparently the female servants were also switched to prevent him becoming suspicious beforehand.

He accuses *Laḅan* of treachery, only to find out that the custom in that area is for the older sister to be married first, unless the older sister has any form of disability. This may or may not be true and a way of *Laḅan* getting both his daughters married. Now it is *Laḅan*'s turn to set the rules, whereby he orders *Ya'aqob* to work another seven years for *Raḥēl*; she will become his wife at the end of the current celebrations. At least he keeps his promise this time and *Ya'aqob* finds himself with two wives and their female servants. As confirmation of our study last week, concerning love and hate, the following:

Berēshith 29 ³⁰And he also went in to *Raḥēl*, and he also loved *Raḥēl* more than *Lě'ah*. And he served with *Laḅan* still another seven years. ³¹And *יהוה* saw that *Lě'ah* was unloved, and He opened her womb, but *Raḥēl* was barren. [emphasis added]

Sometimes the plans *YAH* has for us are obscure and other times completely inapprehensible. As with *Ya'aqob* being the child of the covenant, *YAH* has already decided which woman was to continue the lineage and we see that *Raḥēl*, as the more loved woman, is barren. *Lě'ah* bears four sons in quick succession and each one is given a name which she hopes would make her husband love her more:

1. *Re'ubēn* – see/behold a son; (For *יהוה* has looked on my affliction, because now my husband is going to love me. [29:32])
2. *Shim'on* – He (*YAH*) has heard; (Because *יהוה* has heard that I am unloved, He gave me this son too. [29:33])
3. *Lěwi* – joined to; (Now this time my husband is joined to me, because I have borne him three sons. [29:34])
4. *Yehuḏah* – praised/celebrated; (Now I praise *יהוה* . [29:35])

It seems as if the ANE tradition rears its head again, as *Raḥēl* accuses *Ya'aqob* indirectly for not bearing children. Again we see the custom where she follows grandmother *Sarah*'s gimmick (cf. 16:2-3) by giving her female servant, *Bilhah*, to *Ya'aqob* as wife, who would then give birth on *Raḥēl*'s lap. She would be seen as

the foster-mother and built up in that way. When *Bilhah's* first son is born, *Rahēl* names him *Dan*. The second son is given the name *Naphtali*:

5. *Dan* – judge; (*Elohim* has rightly ruled my case, and has also heard my voice and given me a son. [30:6])
6. *Naphtali* – my wrestling; (With great wrestlings I have wrestled with my sister, and I have overcome. [30:8])

Some sources profess *Lě'ah* and *Rahēl* to have been twins, similar to *Ėsaw* and *Ya'aqob*. This would bring about that *Ėsaw* and *Lě'ah*, being the older in each case, would get married and *Ya'aqob* and *Rahēl* would get married. Unfortunately for *Ėsaw*, his reputation preceeded him and *Lě'ah* refused to be married to such a person. This is given as a reason why she had not yet been married and consequently became *Ya'aqob's* first wife. Twins or not, genes do not lie and jealousy is a disease, when *Lě'ah* pulls the same stunt as her sister and grandmother *Sarah*: *Ya'aqob* gets his fourth wife! *Lě'ah's* female servant, *Zilpah*, becomes pregnant and *Lě'ah* names the first one *Gad*. When *Zilpah* bears her second child, *Lě'ah* gives him the name *Ashēr*:

7. *Gad* – fortune (Fortune comes! [30:11])
8. *Ashēr* – happy (I am happy, for the daughters shall call me happy. [30:13])

A short background on the household of *Laḡan*: even though his father, *Bethu'ēl*, agreed at the time that *YAH* had appointed *Riḡqah* as the wife for *Yitshaq*, he never made any commitment to walk in the ways of *YAH*. They all live among pagans and we know the expression: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do". This is exactly what happens here. As in the case with *Terah*, *Abraham's* father, *Bethu'ēl* possessed plenty of house idols and these were passed on to *Laḡan*. This would include figurines made of wood, metal and stone. They also had many superstitions, possibly similar to the black cat, tooth fairy and various others we grew up with in Christianity.

We experience one of these superstitions when a 5-year old *Re'ubēn* wanders in the field during the wheat harvest and finds mandrakes (love-apples), which he brings to his mother, *Lě'ah*. Mandrakes is related to tomatoes and potatoes, but could be lethal. The purple-blue flowers appear during winter and the fruit, which appears in summer, is yellow, similar in size to a plum. It has a strong, aromatic flavour. Many people are still convinced that barren women can bear children by using a processed form of this plant, and it is still widely used as an aphrodisiac (cf. *Shir HaShirim* 7:13). Surely this is what *Rahēl* had in mind when she saw *Re'ubēn* handing the mandrakes to his mother, *Lě'ah*. In contrast to mother-in-law *Riḡqah* and father-in-law *Yitshaq*, who bowed in supplication to *YAH*, this woman tries to heal her womb in a superstitious way. She is so convinced of the power of the mandrakes, that she is willing to part with her loving husband, allowing him to go to *Lě'ah's* tent.



Scripture teaches us that *Lě'ah* didn't act the same as her sister:

Berēshith 30 ¹⁷ And *Elohim* listened to *Lě'ah*, and she conceived and bore *Ya'aqob* a fifth son.

The fact that *YAH* listened to her, teaches us that she made supplication to Him, although she is certain of being rewarded for being a faithful spouse. We also learn from Scripture what *YAH* teaches us (cf. *B'reisheet* 2:23-25), even though it hasn't yet been put in writing by any prophet (*Mosheh* and others). It is also clear from Scripture that *Ya'aqob* did not spurn *Lě'ah*, since she now brings three children into this world – her fifth and sixth sons, as well as a daughter, *Dinah*. This name refers to judgement or fairness, like the case of brother *Dan*. Scripture doesn't elaborate any more, but it is not impossible that there were other daughters (cf. 37:35), but this is the only one whose name we learn:

9. *Yissaskar* – there is recompense/he will bring a reward (*Elohim* has given me my hire, because I have given my female servant to my husband. [30:18])
10. *Zebulun* – exalted/habitation, to reside (*Elohim* has presented me with a good present. Now my husband is going to dwell with me, because I have borne him six sons. (30:20))

Suddenly we learn that *YAH* 'remembers' *Rahěl* and opens her womb. *YAH* never forgets anyone, but He makes things happen according to His plan and at the appropriate time. Remembering someone is simply a phrase of Him taking pity on someone when His timing is right, when the person concerned is ready to move on and not doubt the decisions *YAH* makes in any way. *Rahěl* bears a son and he is named *Yosěph*:

11. *Yosěph* – let Him (*Elohim*) add (*יהוה* has added to me another son. [3:24])

All these events indicate to *Ya'aqob* to return to his place of birth, which is confirmed by a message he receives from *YAH*. The apocrypha relate to us that *Ribqah* would have sent her female servant, *Deborah*, to *Ya'aqob*, ordering him to return home. When he informs *Laban*, his father-in-law is immediately aware of the blessings on their household because of *Ya'aqob*. He convinces him to stay and even enquires about remuneration! *Ya'aqob* doesn't require any form of payment, except to have all the speckled and spotted sheep – all white sheep were to belong to 'white', *Laban*. Unknown to *Laban*, *Ya'aqob* could have acquired knowledge² that would help him increase his flock by more than 25%. Apparently this was also shown him in a vision. *Laban* agrees to this suggestion, and this is where we see a huge increase in the flocks of *Ya'aqob*. Eventually the sons of *Laban* start insinuating that *Ya'aqob* is stealing from their flock, which is the last straw for *Ya'aqob* and he eventually obeys the voice of *YAH* to return to his homeland.

Ya'aqob commands his wives, concubines and children to start packing all their possessions. With everything loaded onto camels they depart while *Laban* is busy shearing sheep in a different location. Without *Ya'aqob* knowing about it, *Rahěl* steals her father's house idols and hides them in her saddle bag. The caravan moves in the direction of *Gil'ad* and three days later *Laban* is notified of their departure, being told that *Ya'aqob* has stolen his heart. This is typical ANE expression of someone doing something without the other party being aware of it. *Laban* chases after *Ya'aqob* for seven days and eventually passes him. Here we learn another Hebrew idiom:

Berěshith 31 ²⁴But in a dream by night *Elohim* came to *Laban* the Aramean, and said to him, "Guard yourself, that you do not speak to *Ya'aqob* either good or evil."

The true meaning of this is not that *Laban* is disobedient to the word of *YAH*, but that the other party or person should in no way be harmed physically. *Laban* accuses *Ya'aqob* that he had sneaked away like a fugitive – he has conveniently forgotten that *Ya'aqob* had requested to leave six years previously! He even pretends to have let them all go with joy, songs with tambourine and lyre. All of this was hidden behind his true reason, namely to find out who had stolen his house idols. *Ya'aqob* announces a curse on the guilty person and with his permission, *Laban* searches everyone and everything. When he gets to *Rahěl*, she pretends to "be in the way of women", a typical expression for menstruation. The curse of *Ya'aqob* would remain in place, however, and this will be discussed in a future study, in the will of *YAH*.

2 Victor P Hamilton: The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18—50, p. 257, New International Commentary on the Old Testament series. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

These house idols, **תִּרְפִּים** (*te-ra-Fim*), would be anything between 50cm and 100cm in length, but could even be worn on the person during certain rituals. Some of them may also represent deceased ancestors honoured by the living descendants. This teaches us that *Laban* and his family worshipped in a similar fashion as most Christians, sometimes *YAH* and sometimes their own idols, even pretending their idols were similar to *YAH* (cf. *Y'hoshua* 24:1-3). Scripture teaches us that *YAH* not only appeared to the patriarchs, but also to other people (*Laban* in v. 29; *Abimelek* in 20:3 *et al*). We also see a fair comparison in the way *Ya'aqob* escapes from *Laban* and the eventual escape of his descendants from *Mitsrayim*.

Laban realises that *Ya'aqob* is determined to return to his homeland and suggests that they make a pact. *Ya'aqob* subsequently takes a large stone which he sets up as a column. In fact, they gather plenty of stones and set them on a heap, after which they have a meal, sharing bread. *Laban* calls the place **יְגֵר שְׁהָדוּתָא** (*y'Gar sa-ha-du-Ta*), heap of witness, but *Ya'aqob* prefers the name **גִּלְעָד** (*gal-Ed*), witness heap. However, it is also known as **הַמִּצְפָּה** (*ha-mitz-Pah*), watchtower, as it would serve the purpose that *YAH* would keep watch when they part and go their own ways. We see this watchtower also mentioned in *D'varim* 3:12-13 and *Shof'tim* 11:29. *Laban* blesses all his children returns to his abode.



Our last *aliyah* ends on a high note, where the scene changes and *Ya'aqob* is met by messengers. This is not his first encounter with these divine beings and he calls the place **מַחֲנֵי** (*ma-cha-Na-yim*), double camp. These messengers are different to the ones he saw 20 years earlier on the ladder. He divides his entire household into two camps, possibly out of fear for what *Esau* might do when they eventually meet. We find this behaviour rather strange, considering the blessings he had received the last six years. It seems as if he has more fear of his brother than the protection of *YAH*, which has been with him up to this point in time.

When studying the lives of our patriarchs, we find that each one, like all of us, have different personalities. Each one has a different view of their relationship with *YAH*, but they never flurry over fatuity. This is indeed a good example, something we should strive to follow, a lifestyle we should adopt and also arrange our prayers and supplications accordingly. According to Scripture we should, like the patriarchs and *Dani'el* (cf. *Dani'el* 6:10), converse in prayer with *YAH* at least three times daily: *Abraham* in the morning (cf. *B'reisheet* 19:27-28), *Yits'haq* late afternoon (cf. *B'reisheet* 24:63) and *Ya'aqob* in the evening (cf. *B'reisheet* 32:9-12). However, prayer should not only be limited to these times, as *Sha'ul* teaches us:

Tas'loniqim Aleph 5 ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸in all circumstances give thanks, for this is the desire of *Elohim* in Messiah **יהושע** for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise prophecies, ²¹prove them all. Hold fast what is good. ²²Keep back from every form of wickedness. [emphasis added]

The key to effective prayer is to be like *Yeshua*, one of the reasons we should always regard him in every prayer as the vehicle through which we enter into the Presence of *YAH*. We should be very careful, though, in what we ask of *YAH*; at a certain stage He may just answer one of our selfish requests! Consider *Farao* and the hardening of his heart. In a certain way all prayers are answered, even if the answer is 'no'. The most important angle of prayer is that the *Torah*-believer actually spends time with *YAH*, while also fully trusting only in His ways and decisions.

Shabbat shalom!

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- <https://streamer.radio.co/se49d38f27/listen>
- The free RadioLine app (recommended):
 - for Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.radioline.android.radioline&pcampaignid=web_share
 - for iPhone: <https://apps.apple.com/za/app/radioline-radio-podcasts/id945478998>
- Zeno: www.zeno.fm/silver-trumpet or the free Zeno app:
 - for Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zenofm.player&pcampaignid=web_share
 - for iPhone: <https://apps.apple.com/za/app/zenoradio/id1207197757>
- hearthis: <https://hearthis.at/silver-trumpet/>

Sources:

We prefer to not use the word 'God', because of personal conviction. In most cases, unless quoted from another source, it will be replaced by 'Elohim' or inflections of the same word.

All citing of Scripture is taken from The Scriptures 2009, unless indicated differently.³

Messianic *Torah* with Commentary – Dr. Gary Gardner

John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible

The Expository Notes of Dr. Thomas L. Constable

Ladder of Jacob

The Word of YAH is free, therefore this study may be freely distributed, provided no changes are made in any way.

3 <https://isr-messianic.org/>