



Endeavour to find perfect happiness

Parashat vayishlach (8) – He sent

Torah: *B'reisheet* 32:3 to 36:43

Haftarah: *Obadyah* 1:1-21

Apostolic Writings: *Yochanan* 1:19 to 2:12

While he had the opportunity to examine the earthly realm of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil”, the *olam hazeh*, to weigh it up against the “tree of life”, the *olam haba*, we see *Ya'aqob*'s mental agony when he has to quit a relatively prosperous life and leaving his family in the wilderness. All he can hold onto now, is *YAH*, the Rock of salvation, to calm his soul and find solace. While doing this, *YAH* reveals Himself by means of a dream, the heavenly realm, the *olam haba*, something *Ya'aqob* has never experienced before. Through heavenly eyes *YAH* shows *Ya'aqob* that there is a better approach to life; he should, however, first learn to follow heavenly protocol.

This passage in Scripture with *Laḇan* taking his leave, now concludes the connection *Ya'aqob* has had with *Ḥaran*. Twenty years before *Ya'aqob* saw messengers going up and down a ladder; now, in circumstances of danger, he sees messengers once again, this time gathered around his camp (*cf. Tehilim* 34:8). It is almost a continuation of the vision at *Bēyth El* and the camp, *Maḥanayim*, is identified as an area about 13 kilometers from where *Ya'aqob* and *Laḇan* made their pact. *Ya'aqob* now sends a message to *Ėsaw* in *Sē'ir* by means of his servants, the place *Ėsaw* resides in since his marriage to the daughter of uncle *Yishma'ēl*. He has now been married for 56 years to his first two wives and roughly 20 years to the last wife, now having an extended household with many children and grandchildren.

After not having been in contact for 34 years, *Ya'aqob* finds it necessary to inform his brother of his own wealth and doesn't expect to receive anything from him. He addresses him in the message as “my master” and “your servant”. He is shocked, though, to learn that *Ėsaw* is already on his way with 400 men; he is aware that their parting so many years ago was not on amicable terms and this causes him great concern. He divides all his possessions into two sections, hoping that one can escape if the other should be attacked. For the first we see *Ya'aqob* praying to *YAH* for deliverance.

As we pointed out at the end of our study last week, *Ya'aqob* was the person who prayed at evening. This is indeed a serious prayer as he is anxious what *Ėsaw* might do to him. First of he would need to beg for forgiveness before continuing on his way home. He can't be the bearer of the Seed if there is any form of animosity against his brother:

- 🏆 *Qolasim 3* ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving each other if anyone has a complaint against another, indeed, as Messiah forgave you so also should you.
- 🏆 *Eph'siyim 4* ³² And be kind towards one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as *Elohim* also forgave you in Messiah.

Something we can learn from *Ya'aqob*, is to 'remind' *YAH* of His promises. Even though this is the first prayer we see recorded in Scripture, this is not the first time that he calls on *YAH*; for whatever reason, other prayers were simply not recorded. It is important to notice that *Ya'aqob* is certain that he is a child of the covenant and bearer of the Seed:

Berëshith 32 ¹² "For You said, 'I shall certainly do good to you, and shall make your seed as the sand of the sea, which are too numerous to count.' "

After his prayer *Ya'aqob* sets aside some goats, camels and donkeys as a gift for *Ėsaw*. When looking at the amount of animals, we must acknowledge that *Ya'aqob* is a brilliant stock-breeder. Not only does he make use of this accomplishment to impress his brother, but also to delight *YAH*. This should embarrass many of us when realising the way we squander away time and our own talents. Are you really living fully to honour *YAH* in everything you do, using every faculty that *YAH* has endowed you with? Perhaps you chase your own tail and make excuses for not living up to the standard *YAH* expects of you. Only you, my dear brother and sister, can answer this truthfully.

Each herd is sent away separately with a servant overlooking it, also carrying a message for *Ėsaw*:

Berëshith 32 ¹⁷ And he commanded the first one, saying, "When *Ėsaw* my brother meets you and asks you, saying, 'To whom do you belong, and where are you going? And whose are these in front of you?' ¹⁸ then you shall say, 'They are your servant *Ya'aqob*'s. It is a present sent to my master *Ėsaw*. And see, he also is behind us.' "

Ya'aqob then sends his two wives, their female servants and eleven sons over the ford of *Yabboq*, but stays alone on the opposite side. The word *עָבַר* (*a-Bar*), to cross over, uses the same root word as *מַעְבָּר* (*ma-aBar*), a crossing place (cf. *Y'hoshua 2:7*; *Shof'tim 3:28*; *Yesha'yahu 16:2*) and denotes very shallow water, since *יָבֵק* (*ya-Boq*) translates as "pouring forth". The largest part of the river is gorged out fairly deep.

At the same spot where his family crossed over, a Man wrestles with *Ya'aqob* until the break of day, without overcoming him. It is rather ironic that *Yabboq* and *Ya'aqob* almost sound the same, especially when pronouncing it fast. Even though the word *אִישׁ* (*ish*), man, is used here, the context in which we read it alludes to a physical revelation of deity, possibly some type of heavenly being. Western literalism finds this expression rather difficult to understand, since both physical and spiritual elements are involved. This combat is to the benefit of *Ya'aqob*, as we see no 'combatting' characteristics of *YAH*! Many times *YAH* appears to *Ya'aqob* (cf. *B'reisheet 28:10-22*; *32:22-31*; *35:9-13*; *46:2-4*) and every time the characteristics and promises of *YAH* are stressed. The key element here is therefore not *Ya'aqob* and his behaviour, but *YAH* and His covenant promises!

The wrestling lasts long, until the heavenly being touches the socket of *Ya'aqob*'s hip, dislocating it. Realising the heavenly character of this being, *Ya'aqob* insists on receiving a blessing from him:

Berëshith 32 ²⁷ So He asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "*Ya'aqob*." ²⁸ And He said, "Your name is no longer called *Ya'aqob*, but *Yisra'el*, because you have striven with *Elohim* and with men, and have overcome."

Different translators have different renditions and pronunciations for the word יִשְׂרָאֵל (*Yis-ra-El*), but with the *niqdot* (punctuation) of the original text, we will keep the pronunciation as “*Yisra’ēl*”. The word literally means “*El prevails*” or “*El conquers*”, as we see yet again how His authority is accentuated in splendour. The name change is key to the interpretation of the event. From BDB 975 we learn that *Yisra’ēl* means “to strive with *El*; to overcome with *El*; to rule with *El*” (cf. *Hoshea* 12:3-4). We have a condensed description at [addendum A](#) which gives more information. It wasn’t *Ya’aqob*’s strength, but *YAH*’s purpose, because names in the Hebrew culture also reflect the person’s characteristics, his attributes. Another preference for the name *Yisra’ēl* can be seen in יִשְׁרוּן (*ye-shu-Run*), which translates as “upright one (cf. *D’varim* 32:15; 33:5,26; *Yesha’yahu* 44:2). The root word, *Yasher/Yashar*, is also used in the apocrypha, the Book of the Upright One.

On p. 67 in the Jewish Study Bible we learn that this being would be the guardian of *Ėsaw* and that this skirmish would serve as warning for everybody who would oppose the nation of the covenant. While it explains why a heavenly being could not necessarily overcome a human being, we see no explanation of how this being was given authority to change the name of *Ya’aqob*. Other commentators contend that it could be *Mika’ēl*, the authoritative messenger and protector of *Yisra’ēl* (cf. *Dani’el* 12:1; 10:21). This is certainly more acceptable, as he would also have authority to change *Ya’aqob*’s name, being a protective messenger, even if it meant only announcing the name change until *YAH* officially changes it at a later stage. Break of day is a special period of time for various activities of *YAH*¹ and also the reason the messenger had to end the wrestling. In light of the fear of seeing *YAH* (cf. *B’reisheet* 16:13; 32:30; *Sh’mot* 33:20), daylight may reveal the identity of *Ya’aqob*’s opponent.

Ya’aqob calls the place פְּנֵי־אֵל (*p’ni-’El*), “face of *El*”, as he had wrestled with *YAH*, even saw Him face to face, yet his life is spared. At this stage he is no longer worthy of the name “heel grabber”, hence the name change by *YAH* Himself! Each of us could earn ourselves the name *Yisra’ēl*, but only when we can wrestle and overcome the evil in our lives:

🥂 **Hazon 3** ⁵“He who overcomes shall be dressed in white robes, and I shall by no means blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I shall confess his name before My Father and before His messengers.

🥂 **Hazon 21** ⁷“The one who overcomes shall inherit all this, and I shall be his *Elohim* and he shall be My son.

The name *Yisra’ēl* is not necessarily a country or a nation on earth, but a community of those who confess *Yeshua* as their salvation and walk according to the rules of *YAH* on The Way of Truth, the way *Yeshua* has already fulfilled it (cf. *Mattityahu* 5:17-19). With the same conviction we, as *Yisra’ēl*, may also meet our brother *Ėsaw*, having the assurance that not a hair of our head will be lost, unless it is the will of *YAH*. We should therefore totally rid ourselves of all forms of idolism, crosses in our houses, around our necks and in our cars, every form of pagan worship and certainly of all superstitions. Every curse ever placed on your family should be renounced in the name of *Yeshua*, without ever thinking about it ever again. The enemy will try to throw back every sin we’ve confessed before, but we can ignore his ruthless tactics as *YAH* has already forgiven those. Two things we may ask ourselves:

1. Would *YAH* like to hear what I am about to say?
2. Would *YAH* like to see what I am about to do?

Ya’aqob now doesn’t have that frisk way of walking as he had when going to *Laban*’s place, but he now walks with a limp, like someone with a flat wheel. This lameness is actually a blessing, as *Ėsaw* has some compassion when they eventually meet. However, *Ėsaw* doesn’t meet with *Ya’aqob* in a cheerful way. Scripture teaches us that *Ėsaw* ran towards *Ya’aqob*, embraced him, fell on his neck and kissed him, while

1 New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis (NIDOTTE), vol. 4, p. 85

both wept. We discussed the act of kissing last week, yet we see a strange occurrence in the *TaNaKh*. The original text uses the word וַיִּשָּׁקְהוּ (*va-yi-sha-Qe-hu*), “he kissed him”, but each letter has dot above it – something bizarre: וַיִּשָּׁקְהוּ. The sage, *Rashi*, explains that this type of additional punctuation should render the meaning of the word in a different way. When we see more words than dots, the word should be defined as written, but when there are more dots than letters, the letters are to be seen differently to what is written. In this case the amount of letters and dots are the same and most commentators are in agreement that the kiss *Ėsaw* gave his brother is false. There are very few commentators that agree on a genuine cheerful meeting between the two brothers.

Each person has a *yetzer hara*, evil inclination and a *yetzer hatov*, good inclination. For that reason we want to give *Ėsaw* the benefit of the doubt. Earlier we saw how important it is to forgive one another and that we should humble ourselves in all situations:

Mattithyahu 16 ²⁴Then יְהוֹשֻׁעַ said to His taught ones, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his stake, and follow Me. ²⁵“For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it.

As a result of the wrestling of the previous night, *Ya'aqob* meets his brother with a positive attitude and we may say the same of *Ėsaw*. After humbling himself before *Ėsaw*, *YAH* blesses *Ya'aqob* and inspires him spiritually. *YAH* takes control of the situation and ensures that a heavenly meeting takes place between the two brothers. *Ya'aqob* admits that he not only saw the face of *YAH*, but also the face of his brother who receives him in a marvellous way. This is when we realise the power of *YAH*, who changes a certain death into life. Anyone who humbles themselves before *YAH*, will be lifted up and experience a dramatic change in their lives:

Ya'aqob 4 ⁷So then subject yourselves to *Elohim*. Resist the devil and he shall flee from you. ⁸Draw near to *Elohim* and He shall draw near to you. Cleanse hands, sinners. And cleanse the hearts, you double-minded! ⁹Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to dejection. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the sight of the Master, and He shall lift you up.

After all the formalities of greeting between *Ya'aqob* and *Ėsaw* come to an end, the female servants approach the party, followed by *Lě'ah* with her children; the last to join them is *Rahě'l* with *Yosěph*. All of them bow down before *Ėsaw*. Scripture never mentions *Ėsaw* being surrounded by cattle and flocks, whereas *Ya'aqob* is always amidst his flocks. This is to teach us the difference in their character. *Ėsaw* has nothing of the fruit of *Ruach* within him, while *Ya'aqob* has the fruit one hundred fold. We get the impression of *Ėsaw* having become his own god, like most people who do not walk The Way of Truth. He has his own support personnel and following. In contrast, *Ya'aqob*, even with other shortcomings, is an upright man, pure of heart and stands in front of his brother as a servant, totally dependent on the provision of *YAH*, His protection and guidance.

Although *Ėsaw* insists on them moving away together, even having some of his men accompany *Ya'aqob*, the latter doesn't trust his motives. He takes his own course, towards the west, moving to the *Yarden*, where he builds a house and booths for his livestock. He calls the place *Sukkoth*, because of the many shelters. A short while later he moves into *Kena'an*, to *Shekem*, where he buys land and builds an altar to honour *YAH*. He calls the altar *Ėl Eloě Yisra'ěl*, the mighty *Elohim* of *Yisra'ěl*. At this stage *Dinah* is around 6 or 7 years old.

The story of *Ya'aqob* is a shadow picture of our own lives. When starting on The Way of Truth, *YAH* teaches us how to live according to His Word and prepares us as followers of *Yeshua* how to honour and keep the set-apart times, as well as accepting the accompanying blessings (cf. *Sh'mot* 19:5-6; 2 *Kefa* 2:9).

Ironical, though, that the highlight of this *sidrah* is a narrative during which we never read the Name of *YAH*. This teaches us that the wisdom of *YAH* is not present during this time. As with the birth of his sons, the household of *Ya'aqob* is deranged, abnormal, due to his failure to act as a father should. His sons are foolhardy and unbridled and he doesn't do anything about it. Nobody in this narrative escapes scolding. We come to know a novel contrast here with *Ya'aqob's* agony when he considers *Yoseph's* possible death, compared to his silence regarding *Dinah's* ravishment. This entire passage is a mishmash of good and evil, like most of the history of the patriarchs.

The main purpose of this narrative is to teach the youth, especially girls and their parents, the irresponsible and reckless ways of simply accepting and doing certain things without gaining the necessary background and setting rules in place. At this stage *Dinah* is anything between 12 and 15 years old, according to most scholars. Josephus² is certain that some form of celebration took place in the city of *Shekem* and that *Dinah* was anxious to see some of the new fashions on display – some mss. allude to *Dinah* going on her own, but most have the two wives of *Ya'aqob* and their female servants in the narrative. During her visit, the son of *Hamor* (donkey), *Shekem*, sees her, then abducts and ravishes her. This is similar to the events when the “sons of *Elohim* saw the daughters of men and took them as wives” (cf. *B'reisheet* 6:2).

In ch. 33 of the Book of *Yashar* we are taught that *Shekem* takes *Dinah* to his house, possibly against her will. *Ya'aqob* is notified of this and sends twelve servants to bring her back, but *Shekem* chases them away empty handed, while hugging and kissing her in their presence before they leave. The servants arrive back home without *Dinah*, after which *Ya'aqob* sends two female servants to tend to *Dinah*. However, we notice once again the silence mentioned earlier:

Yashar 33¹⁵ And Jacob knew moreover that Shechem had defiled his daughter, but he said nothing, and his sons were feeding his cattle in the field, and Jacob remained silent till their return.

After this abominable act, *Shekem* convinces his father to negotiate for *Dinah* to become his wife. At first the sons of *Ya'aqob* want to know nothing of this and would rather see the perpetrator dead. They call upon the fourth law of *Noach*, which states that matrimony is set apart and may not involve any form of sexual licentiousness. After a while they all calm down and learn through the negotiations that a large *מֶהָר* (*Mo-har*) is at stake. *Dinah*, in her absence, would apparently agree, but the sons of *Ya'aqob* offer shrewd talk, as their sister had been ravished. They suggest that all the men of the city first need to be circumcised, hoping this would discourage the marriage proposal. *Shekem* immediately agrees to the circumcision and he and *Hamor* put this suggestion to the men of the city. All agree to being circumcised, although we can't help but notice the low morals the people of this area uphold. In principle any woman not accompanied by an escort or spouse could be ravished and would afterwards be traded like an animal, with some type of agreement between the parties concerned, without any form of apology to the woman or her party. The talk of their becoming wealthy by this type of treaty doesn't go unnoticed, accentuating the greed of these unsophisticated peoples.

A long narrative in ch. 34 of the Book of *Yashar* teaches us that not all men submit willingly to being circumcised. *Hamor's* father, *Chiddekem* (correct spelling should possibly be *Chideqem*, but this can't be confirmed), including his six brothers, simply refuse. They are extremely upset about the event leading to this chaos and would rather see *Hamor*, *Shekem* and *Dinah* murdered. They suggest waiting until the circumcised ones had healed, after which they will eradicate *Ya'aqob* and his family. *Dinah* hears of this and sends one of her female servants to *Ya'aqob* with the information. He is furious and we read:

Yashar 34²³ And Simeon and Lēwi swore and said, As the Lord liveth, the God of the whole earth, by this time tomorrow, there shall not be a remnant left in the whole city.

2 Antiquities of the Jews, ch. 21, section 1, p. 54

Dinah is the sister of *Shim'on* and *Lěwi*, all children of *Lě'ah*, and it only stands to reason that they care for her. They wait until the third day, when the pain of those circumcised would be at its worst, when they go into the city, each armed with a sword, kill everyone in the city and bring their sister home. It may be possible that they have support of some of their brothers, but whoever are involved return with plenty of flocks, herds and donkeys, as well as everything in the field. *Ya'aqob* is not impressed by this action and is afraid that other inhabitants of the land may now turn against them. Typically human, *Shim'on* and *Lěwi* try to justify themselves, but in a case like this the goal can't be justified. Interesting that they refer to *Dinah* as "our sister" and not "your daughter", possibly their way to insinuate *Ya'aqob*'s lack of sympathy and care for *Dinah*. We also learn of four meaningful matters in this chapter:

1. A certain explanation why *Shim'on* and *Lěwi* do not receive a special blessing from *Ya'aqob* shortly before his death (cf. *Berěshith* 49:5-7).
2. It is extremely important to set the chosen Seed apart from the *Kena'anites*³. *Kena'an* and his seed was cursed by *Noach*, warning humanity of evil that will befall them should they mix with them (cf. *Berěshith* 9:25-27).
3. We find out the reason for the sanctification, cleansing, of *Ya'aqob* and his household, a subject we will shortly study.
4. All of this demonstrates the authoritative control of *YAH*.

When *YAH* instituted the covenant of circumcision, it was given as a sign of favour, not a means of deception, something which aggravates the heinous transgression of the two brothers. We see the expression yet again: מִדָּה כִּנְגֵד מִדָּה (*mi-Dah ke-Ne-ged mi-Dah*): the same measure you use, will be used against you. The action *Hamor* and *Shekem* had in place for *Ya'aqob* and his people, were put in action against them. Notwithstanding offences against us, Scripture teaches us clearly:

- 🏆 *Romiyim* 12 ¹⁷Repay no one evil for evil. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.
- 🏆 *Mishlě* 24 ²⁹Do not say, "Let me do to him as he did to me; I repay each according to his work."
- 🏆 *Kěpha Aleph* 3 ⁹not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, in order to inherit a blessing.
- 🏆 *Tas'loniqim Aleph* 5 ¹⁵See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

After this incident we make another noteworthy discovery. Being commanded by *YAH*, *Ya'aqob* returns to *Běyth El* after six years. He is told to build an altar to honour *El*, by which the past is concluded. Before their departure, *Ya'aqob* is ordered to get rid of all foreign idols. It teaches us once again that *Ya'aqob* had kept his silence all this time, as these idols should have been removed long before. There is a possibility, though, that these idols could have been part of the loot brought home by *Shim'on* and *Lěwi* from *Shekem*. Consequently the entire household hand over all foreign idols and earrings, which *Ya'aqob* buries under the terebinth tree at *Shekem*, possible *Moreh*, the place where *Avraham* had first pitched his tent.

This narrative is indeed a necessary lesson of spiritual preparation we should make part of our lives. Foreign idols can be anything in our lives we consider more important than *YAH* and His Word. Let your mind wander and be honest with yourself, thinking of anything material without which you can't operate, something you wouldn't want to part with – this excludes items used for work, earning your daily bread, also items with which you can help spreading the Word of *YAH* and extending the Kingdom. Certain items can never be consecrated or be used in honour of *YAH* – it should simply be destroyed. There is an interesting verb, הִטְהַרְוּ (*hi-ta-Ru*), cleansing, only used here in *Berěshith*, yet used extensively in the book of *Wayyiqra*. This also alludes to a change of clothing garments (cf. *Sh'mot* 19:10; *B'midbar* 8:7,21; 19:19), something of which every person should take note. This external presentation should therefore be a

3 Calum M. Carmichael, "Forbidden Mixtures," *Vetus Testamentum* 32:4 (1982):pp. 394-415.

reflection of the spiritual preparation for the extended family, where the stain of the massacre at *Shekem* still rested heavily upon them.

The entire company arrive at *Běyth El* where *Ya'aqob* obediently builds the altar and renames it *El-Běyth El*. *Deborah*, the female servant of *Ribqah* passes away and is buried under the notorious terebinth. She was obviously part of the household and deserves this last resting place, called *אֵלֶּן בְּכוֹת* (*a-Lon ba-Chut*), the oak of weeping. *YAH* repeats and confirms His promises to *Ya'aqob* and now officially renames him *Yisra'el*. In the case of *Avraham*, his name was changed and remained that way, yet we see alternating references to both *Ya'aqob* and *Yisra'el*. The former is normally used when referring to the man, the person, while the latter is used more for the spiritual person, as well as the nation that *YAH* is building for Himself. In all these promises and confirmations, we learn:

Berēshith 35 ¹¹ And *Elohim* said to him, "I am *El Shaddai*. Be fruitful and increase, a nation and a company of nations shall be from you, and sovereigns come from your body.

Ya'aqob is certainly prolific, because we never read about *Rahēl* being pregnant for the second time, yet here she gives birth while the company is on their way looking for better pastures for their flocks. A short distance from *Ephrath*, also known as *Běyth Lehem*, the birth place of our Messiah, *Rahēl*, now only 36, struggles birthing her second son. The midwife is positive that the boy will live and shortly before her last breath, *Rahēl* names the child *בֶּן-אֲוִנִי* (*ben o-Ni*), son of my sorrow. *Ya'aqob* eventually breaks his silence of many years when he realises that the numbers have reached completion: this boy completes the number *YAH* had destined for him and he gives the boy the name *בִּנְיָמִן* (*bin-ya-Min*), son of (the) right hand. Keep in mind that the right hand is the sign of power and this boy now designates the power promised him by *YAH*. *Rahēl* is buried at the place where she dies, a place known even in the time period of *Shemu'el* (cf. *Shemu'el Aleph* 10:2). Not knowing that his beloved wife had stolen her father's *terafim*, the house idols, *Ya'aqob* placed a curse on that person. While *Rahēl* played an important part in bringing the chosen nation together, she would never have the privilege of raising her second son – all because of idols!

Ya'aqob continues his nomadic lifestyle and pitches his tent near *מִגְדַּל־עֵדֶר* (*mig-dal 'E-der*), tower of a flock. This is a watchtower near *Běyth Lehem*, used for keeping watch on all the flocks in the vicinity. Shortly afterwards we learn of *Ya'aqob*'s oldest son, *Re'ubēn*, sleeping with *Bilhah*, the concubine and female servant of *Rahēl*. The word used in Scripture is *שָׁכַב* (*sha-Kav*), which translates as "to lie with", "sexual intercourse", "to lie with as in death", "to rest". Scholars want us to understand that *Ya'aqob* would have moved in with *Bilhah* after *Rahēl*'s passing – she was the female servant and a mother of two of his children, after all. *Re'ubēn* was jealous on behalf of his mother, *Lě'ah*, and he apparently moved his father's bed from *Bilhah*'s tent to the tent of *Lě'ah*. It is possible that the wrong assumptions were made, but when *Ya'aqob* hears about this, he immediately expropriates his first born. The birthright immediately goes to the firstborn of *Rahēl*, namely *Yosēph*, but *YAH* does not concern Himself with trivialities of humans. Even if *Re'ubēn* didn't have any sexual relations with *Bilhah*, *Torah* still considers it adultery when one person interferes with the marriage knot of another.

A short summary is given of the descendants of *Ya'aqob*, after which he goes to his father, *Yitshaq*, in *Mamrē*. *Yitshaq* dies aged 180 and his two sons, *Ya'aqob* and *Ėsaw* bury him in the cave of *Maḵpēlah*, with the other forefathers. We also get to know the descendants of *Ėsaw*, but the most important information gleaned from this, is:

Berēshith 36 ⁸ So *Ėsaw* dwelt in Mount *Sě'ir*. *Ėsaw* is *Eḡom*.

Scripture is clear that the *Sě'ir* mountains became the residence of *Ėsaw* and that he was known as *Eḡom*. The one-chapter book that *Obadyah* wrote and compiled many years ago, brings us a prophecy in which he explains the punishment awaiting *Eḡom*. It is also common knowledge that *Eḡom* is nothing but the Roman

empire that destroyed the second temple and murdered every believer, basically their own family! This is probably what could have happened when *Ya'aqob* and *Esau* met at *Yabboq*. Fortunately *YAH* had other plans and this is why we learn from Scripture that *Ya'aqob* had everything he needed.

At this point, we can each ask ourselves: do I have everything I need? Putting it differently: is everything I have really necessary? Some people are not happy with 100 and aim for 200. A young man, just graduated from university, is not happy with his life and seeks a good position; after this he is not happy and wants to get married. Still not happy, he needs to buy a house, and after that he is unhappy because there are no children yet. Going through life, he gets to retirement and is still not happy, because he has never tried to find the right wherewithal; he also used incorrect methods of finding happiness. From *Pirkei Avot*⁴ we learn: "Who is rich? He who rejoices in his portion, as it is said, 'When thou eatest the labor of thine hands, happy art thou, and it shall be well with thee'" (cf. *Tehilim* 128:2). We would like to believe that *Ya'aqob* eventually found the peace he had been longing for his entire life, the perfect happiness. Another surprise awaits him, though...

May it be the desire of our hearts to learn from the mistakes of our patriarchs, never to keep silent when we should speak up, that we will show the necessary mercy and protection for our loved ones, but above all, that we are content with what we have and who we are. Praise *YAH* for His daily provision!

Shabbat shalom!

Hein Zentgraf
hein@zentgraf.org

Silver Trumpet Ministry: www.silvertrumpet.life

11 Kislev 5785 / 12 December 2024

Silver Trumpet Radio links:

- <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.

4 *Pirkei Avot* (Sayings of our Fathers): chapter 4, part 1

All citing of Scripture is taken from The Scriptures 2009, unless indicated differently.⁵

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.

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

Addendum A

From the pen of Dr Bob Utley⁶, we learn the following regarding the name *Yisra'el*:

SPECIAL TOPIC: ISRAEL (the name)

I. Surprisingly the name's meaning is uncertain (BDB 975, KB 442).

- A. El Persists
- B. Let El Persist (jussive)
- C. El Preserves
- D. Let El Contend
- E. El Strives
- F. He who strives with God (word play *B'reisheet*. 32:28)
- G. Reliable (IDB, vol. 2, p. 765)
- H. Successful
- I. Happy

II. Usages in the OT

- A. Jacob's name (supplanter, heel grabber, BDB 784, KB 872, cf. Gen. 25:26) is changed after wrestling with the spiritual personage at the river Jabbok (cf. Gen. 32:22-32; Exod. 32:13). Often the meanings of Hebrew names are sound plays, not etymologies (cf. Gen. 32:28). "Israel" becomes his assigned name (e.g., Gen. 35:10).
- B. It came to be used as a collective name for all of Jacob's twelve sons (e.g., Gen. 32:32; 49:16; Exod. 1:7; 4:22; 28:11; Deut. 3:18; 10:6).
- C. It came to designate the nation formed by the twelve tribes before the exodus (cf. Gen. 47:27; Exod. 4:22; 5:2) and after (cf. Deut. 1:1; 18:6; 33:10).
- D. After the united monarchy of Saul, David, and Solomon the tribes split under Rehoboam (cf. 1 Kings 12). 1. the distinction starts even before the official split (e.g., II Sam. 3:10; 5:5; 20:1; 24:9; 1 Kgs. 1:35; 4:20) 2. designates the northern tribes until the fall of Samaria to Assyria in 722 b.c. (cf. 2 Kings 17).
- E. Used of Judah in a few places (e.g., Isaiah 1; Micah 1:15-16).
- F. After the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles it became again the collective name for all of Jacob's descendants living in Palestine (e.g., *Yeshu'ahu* 17:7,9; Jer. 2:4; 50:17,19).
- G. Used of laity in contradistinction from priests (cf. 1 Chr. 9:2; Ezra 10:25; Neh. 11:3).

6 https://www.freebiblecommentary.org/special_topics/israel.html