

Parashah # 8

(Updated for 11.20.10)

VaYislach ~ וישלך ~ He sent

Torah: B'resheet/Genesis 32:4~36:43

Haftarah: Hoshea/Hosea 11:7~12:12; 'Ovadyah/Obadiah 1-21

B'rit Hadashah: 1st Corinthians 5:1-13; Revelation 7:1-12

Writer's note: I have learned most Christian commentators and Rabbis agree the complete plan of HaShem is in Torah and specifically in (say-fer B'reh-sheet) **Sefer B'resheet/Book of Genesis**. Most readers of scripture have not been taught to look for the Heavenly Father's plan and consequently miss what they are not looking for. With what is happening in the world, it is time for us to really pay attention!!!

This weeks Parashah finds **Ya'akov/Jacob** on his way back "home". It appears Ya'akov takes the initiative in seeking reconciliation and sends word and gifts to his brother, **Esav/Esau**.

CHAPTER 32

Right off the bat, I have an interesting translation controversy. **Verse 4** in The Complete Jewish Bible says he sent **messengers** and the Chumash says **angels**. Now in **my** mind, these are two entirely different types of beings. In checking the Hebrew rendering, I found (mahlah-kheem) **mala'chim** was used, which comes from the root of (mah-lahk) **malakh**. Further study indicates the word **mala'chim** is translated as **angels**, **messengers** or **emissaries**. So take your pick!!! One more thing . . . the root of **malakh** (singular) is (lah-ahk) **la'a'ch**, and means **to send**. For you Hebrew students, **la'a'ch** is spelled **lamed** (lah-mehd = 30), **alef** (ah-lehf = 1), **chaf** (khahf = 20). As you noticed, I placed the numerical value beside each letter. Consequently, the word **la'a'ch** has a numerical value of 51. One of the meanings of **50** is **freedom** and **1** indicates **unity**. I believe as we go through this parashah, we will see Ya'akov finding **freedom** from self and **unity** with HaShem.

Some say **Ya'akov/Jacob** could not avoid this potentially dangerous meeting because he had to pass through **Esav/Esau's** land, Edom, on the way to his parents. Others believe **Ya'akov / Jacob** could have taken an "out-of-the-way" route to avoid any controversy. I choose to believe Ya'akov was tired of "running" and was ready to meet this challenge head on as he had done with Lavan shortly before he crossed over into the Promised Land.

Verse 7 tells us about **Esav/Esau** coming to meet **Ya'akov/Jacob** and bringing 400 men with him. Sounds more like a warring party than a welcoming party to me! Apparently, it seemed the same to Ya'akov because he begins to make plans concerning the positioning of his family members. This was all preceded by gifts in order to incur favor with Esav. In fact, he positioned the wives and their children with Joseph and Rachel being last. As we will see later, the very thing most important to **Ya'akov/Jacob** was the very thing HaShem took away from him. Although he could protect her from most things, he was not able to save her from death.

In **verse 12** in the Complete Jewish Bible (it might be verse 11 in yours); Ya'akov is talking with HaShem about his concern regarding **Esav/Esau**. "I'm afraid of him; afraid he'll come and attack me, without regard for mothers or children." I couldn't help but think . . . "things haven't changed!" The Arabs/Palestinians still attack with no regard for mothers or children. Isn't that interesting?!?!?!

The Chumash tells us Ya'akov prepared himself in three ways: **battle**, **prayer** and **tribute**.

- His **military preparations** included dividing his people into different camps. Each camp had some of his men, maidservants and cattle but he kept his wives and children together in the rear so the others would be a buffer between them and **Esav/Esau**. In the other groups, the mothers went ahead of their sons, but it says Joseph stood in front of his mother, Rachel, to shield her from Esau's eyes because she was so beautiful.
- **Ya'akov/Jacob** knew without G~d's help all of his plans would be in vain, so **prayer** played a major role in each and every decision Ya'akov made.
- To show his goodwill, **Ya'akov/Jacob** sent a lavish **tribute**, actually, several tributes to **Esav/Esau**. He wanted each drove of livestock to be separate and distinct so the greedy **Esav/Esau** would see animals coming toward him from across the horizon, making the gift seem even larger and more impressive.

Furthermore, commentary tells us, as a skilled shepherd who was familiar with animals' breeding habits, Ya'akov sent sufficient males for the needs of the females. Ya'akov wanted Esau to realize he planned the tribute to yield maximum productivity.

Those quite impressive tributes are listed in **verses 14-16**. As I calculated these, there were a total of . . .

*220 goats *220 sheep *30 to ?? camels *50 cattle *30 donkeys

. . . for a grand total of 550 to ?? head of animals. Several translations said 30 milk camels and their colts or foals but none . . . not one . . . said how many young'uns there were. I think this is strange because the other animals are specifically designated. Oh well . . . another one of those things to ask the Father when I see Him (pah-neem l'pah-neem) **p'nim l'p'nim/face to face**.

Before we get into the story of **Ya'akov/Jacob's** wrestling match, I want to call your attention to **verse 23**. My translation says ". . . and took his two wives, his two handmaids and his eleven sons (or children) and crossed the (Yah-boke) **Yabok/Jabbok**" (there are no "Js" in the Hebrew language!). According to my calculations from last week, there were twelve children, one being a girl, Dinah. So what's the deal here? I couldn't find any commentary on this at all!! So . . . what's up with this????

Okay, on to the wrestling match! After all, what good is a story without some sort of sporting event?!

Ya'akov/Jacob is assaulted by an unknown assailant in the darkness of night. Ya'akov wrestles him down and refuses to let go of his mysterious assailant, even demanding a blessing of him. The assailant asks him "What is your name?" As Ya'akov holds on to the man with all his strength, he answers "Ya'akov" which means "Heel-grabber" despite what many of us have been taught in the past. This name is a wrestling term and is a reference to Ya'akov's talent for not letting go . . . for his tenaciousness.

The big question here is, with whom was Ya'akov wrestling? Was it an enemy angel? Was it an angel of G~d? Was it G~d himself? Who/what was it? I believe we get a concrete answer in **verse 31** when Ya'akov calls the name of that place, (P'nee El) **P'ni-El** meaning **Face of G~d**, saying "Because I have seen G~d face to face, yet my life is spared." Before the entire episode is over, Ya'akov receives a new name **Yisra'el/Isra'el**. According to my friend in Jerusalem, Orthodox Rabbi Ya'akov Youlus, **Yisra'el/Israel** is really two words; **ya-shar** which means **straight** and **el** which means G~d. Together, **Israel** means **straight to G~d**. There are some who believe because Ya'akov overcame the angel his name means **prevailing** or **superiority**.

Back to the wrestling term. Consider this . . . Ya'akov wrestled with HaShem and men.

- Ya'akov wrestled with HaShem for the blessings
- He wrestled with Esav for the blessing
- With Yitz'chak for the blessings
- With Lavan for the blessing

. . . and in each struggle, he eventually prevailed. Ya'akov is the wrestler and he pursued a life of wrestling because he recognized the blessing of Adonai was worth the struggle. It was such a struggle for which Esav was willing to trade his birthright for a bowl of "red, red stuff". We learn from Ya'akov the value of the eternal. We learn to hold on to the Holy One of Israel and refuse to let go of Him!

The chapter ends with **verse 33 (32)** stating the children of Israel don't eat the sinew which shrank, which is in the hollow of the thigh. It goes on to say "to this day". Now, according to **Rav Sha'ul/Rabbi Paul**, in **Ephesians 2:11-12**, a believer becomes part of the commonwealth of Israel, a citizen so to speak, so that makes me one of the children of Israel. That's what the whole "grafting-in" thing is all about!!! Anyway, I don't eat much beef but from now on, I want to be sure I don't eat the sinew from the hollow of the thigh.

A TRIVIA TIDBIT

Did you know the word **YiSRAeL** contains the first letter from the names of all the Patriarchs and Matriarchs? Remember, in Hebrew, there are no vowels, per se. This is why there is no "i" and no "e".

Yud (yude)

Yitz'chak and Ya'akov

(i)

S in (seen)

Sarah

<u>R</u> esh (reh-sh)	Rivkah/Rebecca & Raquel/Rachel
<u>A</u> leph (ah-lef)	Avraham/Abraham
(e)	
<u>L</u> amed (lah-med)	Leah

CHAPTER 33

As Esau is approaching, Ya'akov prostrates himself seven times. In other words, he bows down to the ground, humbling himself before Esau, the Middle East custom of the day. Seven represents spiritual perfection and completeness. We will do well to remember, according to HaShem, he is no longer Ya'akov but Isra'el, a name given to him by the Holy One, blessed be He! He has attained his spiritual completeness.

Verses 12-16 describe the encounter between **Esav/Esau** and **Ya'akov/Jacob**. They embrace, kiss on the cheeks, as is customary in the East, and they wept. At this point, Esau insists on escorting the entire entourage. I sense distrust on Ya'akov's part concerning **Esav/Esau's** offer to accompany him and I can't say I blame him. **Ya'akov/Jacob** graciously declines because of the slow pace required for the cattle and children.

"Ya'akov built himself a house and for his livestock he made shelters." (**Verse 17**) The Hebrew word used here for **shelters** is (sue-coat) **sukkot** and he called the name of the place **Sukkot**. This seems like a strange name for a town but the teaching here indicates this was probably the first time anyone took the trouble to shelter the animals from the sun and cold. The Chumash commentary says, "since Jacob made a public display of compassion for all living creatures, the place was named for this precedent-setting act."

At the beginning of **verse 18**, we are told "Jacob arrived **intact** at the city of Shechem . . ."As we know, "intact" literally means whole; perfect; unimpaired. I believe the Torah is implying he arrived . . .

- Intact ~ physically, having recovered from the injury inflicted by the angel
- Intact ~ financially, lacking nothing, though he had showered lavish gifts upon Esau
- Intact ~ in his learning, having forgotten nothing while in Laban's house. |

Verse 19 states "**he bought**" a parcel of land. The purpose of this was to establish "an inalienable right to the land by means of purchase." We are told this plot eventually became the site of Joseph's sepulcher and is one of the three places which the Torah vouches for Israel's ownership. The other places are the Cave of Machpelah, bought by Abraham and the site of the Temple, bought by David.

An interesting note, in 2003, the destruction of Joseph's Tomb in Shechem, by the Palestinian Moslems was the most pro-active Arab effort to undermine the legitimacy of Judaism's claim to its ancient homeland. They want to ensure eventual complete and undisputed Islamic control of the

entire Middle East with no evidence remaining Israel was ever in The Land prior to 1948. For more information concerning this atrocity check out the following sites:

- <http://www.shechem.org/kyos/engkyos.html>
- <http://christianactionforisrael.org/isreport/feb03/intolerance.html>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph%27s_Tomb

I truly love it when we receive these (Eve-reet) *Ivrit/Hebrew* lessons. It's just so awesome to learn the meanings of names we have read about but not really known the meaning. In **verse 20** it says, "There he put up an altar, which he called (El El-oh-hay Yisra'el) ***El-Elohei-Yisra'el***. meaning ***G~d, the G~d of Isra'el***. This was fulfillment of his vow 22 years earlier as he was leaving The Land.

The Chumash tell us the Jews have always sought to identify HaShem as the Author of their salvations and triumphs. Consequently, names have always been a way to do this. This is why we find such names as . . .

- Zuriel (Zoo-ree-ehl) G~d is my Rock
- Zurishaddai (Zoo-ree shad-die) Shaddai is my Rock
- Emanuel (Eh-man-you-ehl) G~d is with us

And the familiar names of angels which end in El (G~d)

- Gabriel (Gah-bree-ehl) Power is G~d's
- Michael (Mi-khah-ehl) Who is like G~d

The sense of such names, like the name Ya'akov gave his altar, is whenever one thinks of them; one is reminded . . . HaShem is the Source of power and blessing.

It is reported many sir names which end in "el" are very possibly of Hebrew decent.

CHAPTER 34

Verses 1-31 tell of the rape of (Dee-nah) Dinah. Oh dear!!! The only girl-child of the family is abducted and raped by Shechem. Again, there are many theories concerning this situation. Apparently, she was out visiting with some of the local girls when she was kidnapped, so to speak, by Shechem. On the other hand, what made Shechem think he could get by with such an immoral act? Just because he was the "prince of the city" doesn't give him that kind of authority. Nonetheless, Dinah's brothers come to her defense and will settle for nothing less than all of the city townsmen becoming circumcised and being like them in order to exchange daughters in marriage. However, they had no intention of that ever taking place. They chose this method to disable the Shechemites by inflicting injury on the organ which Shechem used to assault Dinah.

As we learned several weeks ago with Abraham, the 3rd day is the most sore and painful day after the circumcision. So it was then ***Sh'mon/Simeon*** and ***Levi/Levy*** reeked havoc on the entire

community, killing all the male inhabitants. Then the rest of “the boys” plundered the city, taking everything captive: wives, children, flocks, cattle, donkeys, everything!

Verse 30 indicates Ya’akov decides to throw a party . . . a pity party, because the people of the community turned against him due to what “the boys” had done. Then “the boys” ask a very interesting question, “Should we let our sister be treated like a whore?” (**verse 31**) Oddly, there is no recorded answer to this question.

CHAPTER 35

Perhaps the answer to the question above is here. HaShem tells Ya’akov to return to Beit-El and be the man He has called Ya’akov to be. Last week we read **Ya’akov/Jacob** went to (looze) **Luz** and vowed Beit El would be the site of G~d’s house (**28:20**). Now, 22 years later, HaShem has told Ya’akov to return to **Beit-El/House of G~d** or Luz, implying he must fulfill his vow. Today, we know **G~d’s House/Beit-El** is Ramallah, where the Palestinian Headquarters are located.

Did you pick up on the **mikveh/water immersion** in **verse 2**? Ya’akov tells his family and all who were with him to . . .

- get rid of the idols they had
- purify themselves and . . .
- put on clean clothes.

From our previous studies, we understand purification came from the act of the mikveh. Then they traveled to **El Beit El/G~d of the House of G~d** where **Ya’akov / Jacob** built an altar.

This above is an equally good message today for those who have not already done so. It is time for all believers to . . .

- Arise and go up – let us renounce all our idols
- Arise and go up – let us turn wholeheartedly to HaShem
- Arise and go up – let us walk boldly as the “terror of HaShem” goes before us, stilling all who would give pursuit.

It is time to take our stand for the One who will always stand for us – so let us arise and go up!

Verse 8, tells us **D’vorah/Deborah**, the nurse of Ya’akov’s mother, **Rivkah/Rebecca** dies and is buried below Beit~El under the oak, which was given the name (ah-lone Bah-koot) **Alon-Bakhut** which means **oak of weeping**. Scripture doesn’t tell us why D’vorah was with Ya’akov at this time. I can only conjecture. When Rivkah died, perhaps D’vorah was passed down to the child with whom she interacted the most. I don’t recall knowing this nurse’s name until now. However, we do know, for a fact, it wasn’t just an insert to let us know she died. There is always a reason for what is written in the Holy Word.

According to **verses 9-14**, Ya’akov has another encounter with HaShem and again is told he will have an additional name which will be **Yish-ra’el/Isra’el** (**verse 10**). As we study further, we will find . . .

- he will continue to be called **Ya'akov/Jacob** pertaining to physical and mundane matters
- but the name **Yish-ra'el/Isra'el** will be used for spiritual matters pertaining to the role of the Patriarch and his descendants.

Further, HaShem tells Isra'el He (HaShem) is (Ehl Shahd-dye) **El Shaddai** (G~d of Sufficiency), **All Sufficient One**. You may find this interesting. **Shaddai** comes from the Hebrew root word (shod) **shad** which means **breast**, as in a woman's breast, yielding milk. For those who espouse **The Land (Ha Eretz Isra'el)** belongs to Ishmael because he is Avraham's firstborn, read **verse 12**. "Moreover, the land which I gave to Avraham and Yitz'chak I will give to you and I will give the land to your descendants after you." After HaShem promises **Ya'akov/Israel** the same promises of Avraham and Yitz'chak, **Ya'akov/Israel** sets up a standing stone and another anointing takes place. (**Verse 14**)

In **verses 16-20** we learn Rachel goes into hard labor with Ya'akov's 12th son. She names him **Ben-Oni** (בן אֹנִי) (**son of my grief**) but Ya'akov called him (Ben-yah-meen) **Binyamin / Benjamin** (בְּנִימִן) meaning **son of the right hand or son of the south**. **Binyamin/Benjamin** was the only child born in the Promised Land.

According to commentary, Rachel is understood as symbolic for all Israel and her travail can be understood as a foreshadow of the birth pangs of Messiah. "Son of my trouble" is an appropriate name for Messiah, because His first coming brought a sword to Israel. He warned He did not come to bring peace but a sword (**Mattit'yahu/Matthew 10:34-36** citing **Micah 7:6**). But His second coming will be a different matter. Israel will recognize Yeshua as the One seated at the right hand of the Father. It would seem Jacob was prophetic concerning the second coming when he renamed "son of my trouble" to "son of the right hand". If, in fact, Rachel's travail foreshadows the birth pangs of Messiah, then the name Ben-oni foreshadows Messiah in His first coming and the name Benjamin foreshadows Messiah in His second coming. By the way, have you ever wondered how "son of the right hand" could also mean "son of the south"? Unlike most cultures, Israel places directional emphasis on the East. Think about it . . . the entrance to the Tabernacle of Meetings faced East as well as the entrance to the Holy Temple. When we pray for Israel, we face East. When we face East, what direction is on our right hand? The South, of course. Now you know!!!

This birth pain imagery verse is from the prophets **Yasha'yahu/Isaiah**, **Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah** and **Mikhah/Micah** who often use the "woman in labor" simile. The prophet Yirme'yahu also called it "the time of Jacob's trouble" (**Yirme'yahu/Jeremiah 30:5-7**). Yeshua tells us the beginnings of those birth pangs will be characterized by wars, famines and earthquakes (**Mattit'yahu/Matthew 24:7**). HmMMMM!

Because of the hard labor, Rachel died and was buried on the way to (Ehf-raht) Efrat or (Ehf-rah-tah) Efrata also known as (Beht Leh-khem) **Beit Lechem** which means **House of Bread**. Today we know this town as Bethlehem (can you see it . . . bet-le-chem?) and many tourists have visited Rachel's tomb. However, this area is now under Palestinian control and it isn't safe to go there unescorted.

Stop and think about this . . . isn't it neat "**The Bread of Life**", Yeshua, was born in a city called the "**House of Bread**"?

According to **verse 21**, Isra'el continued his travels and set up camp on the other side of (Mig-dahl Aye-dehr) **Migdal Eder**. **Migdal** means **tower** and **Eder** means **flock** so it is called **Watchtower of**

the Flock. What an appropriate name! When **Ya'akov/Isra'el** first met Raquel, she was a shepherdess who watched her father's flocks. Some research indicates, in the **B'rit Hadashah/Renewed Covenant**, the shepherds watching their flocks by night in the vicinity of Bethlehem were near a place the Torah calls **Migdal Eder/Watchtower of the Flock**.

Alfred Edersheim noticed a reference to **Migdal Eder** in the **Mishnah**. In tractate **Shekelim**, the Watchtower of the Flock is mentioned as follows:

If livestock is found between Jerusalem and Migdal Eder, and in an equivalent distance around the circumference of the city, if they are male, they are regarded as [stray] burnt offerings, if female, they are regarded as [stray] peace offerings. Rabbi Yehudah says, "Any animals suitable for Passover sacrifices are regarded as [stray] Passover sacrifices if found within thirty days of the festival." (m.Shekalim 7:4)

"Based on this piece of **Mishnah**, Edersheim speculated that the flocks that pastured near Bethlehem must have been Temple property, destined for the altar. If so, that would mean the shepherds to whom the angels announced the birth of Yeshua were not just common shepherds, but Levitical shepherds watching over the Temple flocks. However, it seems that Edersheim misunderstood the passage from the **Mishnah**. The sense of the passage, in context within **Shekelim**, is referring not to whole flocks, but specifically to strays found wandering without a flock. When a stray sheep or goat or other animal fit for sacrifice was found between **Migdal Eder** and Jerusalem, or anywhere within an equivalent distance on all sides of Jerusalem, the Sages ruled that it should be assumed to be an animal already designated for sacrifice. This was a safety measure to avoid the possibility of misappropriating something sacred. The passage makes no mention of Temple flocks."

Given the above information, considering Yeshua is concealed in Torah, could you not parallel this to the fact of Yeshua being born in this Holy area? Consequently, He is considered as the spotless Lamb of G~d, destined for the altar. Certainly He was the sacrificial Lamb of G~d.

Verse 22 tells us "**Re'uven/Reuben** went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine and Isra'el heard." That's all scripture says and it appears to me, an act of this nature shows blatant disrespect for his father. On closer study and deeper digging, could it be this first-born was coming to the aid of his mother, Leah? After Rachel died, **Ya'akov/Jacob** took up primary residency with Bilhah, Rachel's handmaiden and the mother of two of his sons, who was also taking care of his two youngest sons. **Re'uven/Reuben** felt this was very disrespectful of his mother so he moved **Ya'akov/Jacob's** bed into his mother's tent and he took liberties with Bilhah. Could it be **Re'uven/Reuben** was acting on behalf of his mother? What do you think?

"The sons of Leah were **Re'uven/Reuben**, **Ya'akov's/Jacob's** first born . . ." so begins **verse 23**. Although the birthright was later transferred from Reuben to Joseph (**1st Chronicles 5:1**) this verse calls Reuben the firstborn to indicate he would continue to have certain privileges of his position in the following ways . . .

- Regarding the inheritance (because he personally received a double share of Jacob's estate and his tribe would be the first to receive its share of Eretz Yisrael)
- Regarding the sacrificial service because before the sin of the Golden Calf, the altar service was performed by the firstborn
- Regarding the census, for the tribe of Reuben was always the first to be counted.

Verses 27-29 state **Ya'akov/Jacob** and his father, **Yitz'chak/Isaac** are reunited at Kiryat-Arba which is known as **Hevron/Hebron** today. Can you imagine the tears and emotions associated with this reunion? How long has it been? Let's see, according to the Chumash, **Ya'akov/Jacob** spent 14 years at **Yeshiva/Torah academy**, then 20 years with **Lavan/Laban** and two years returning home. That's a total of 36 years. He had left empty-handed and somewhat of a fugitive but returned with 12 sons, 1 daughter, 3 wives and a large camp of herdsmen, maidservants and livestock. This joyous reunion was only dampened by the absence of Rachel, who had died on the way to **Eretz Isra'el/Land of Isra'el**. **Yitz'chak/Isaac** and **Ya'akov/Jacob** remained together until Yitz'chak died 21 years later at the age of 180 years. For those of you who are wondering how old Ya'akov is at this point, my "guestimation" is he is approximately 120 years old. I arrived at this since Yitz'chak was 60 when **Esav/Esau** and **Ya'akov/Jacob** were born (**B'resheet/Genesis 25:26**)

CHAPTER 36

Verses 1-43 give us the genealogy of **Esav/Esau**. As I read through the genealogy there were some names I didn't know at all, some sounded familiar and a few I definitely remember! Two specific names are Korah and Amalek. Now I'm beginning to get a better handle on this lineage and it makes me wonder . . . do you think the phrase "rotten to the core" might be a Hebrew one? As we study further this year, we will learn more about Korah, Amalek and the like. Knowing they are the offspring of **Esav/Esau** helps us understand some of their dealings. I think "rotten to the core" describes these two perfectly.

It is obvious the Torah would not have devoted an entire chapter to Esau's genealogy unless it contained important teachings. From these verses and from the parallel genealogies in 1st and 2nd Chronicles, it is clear many of Esau's descendants were products of incest and illegitimacy. It is important to remember, any honor which came to Esau at all was because he was a direct descendant of **Avraham/Abraham**.

In **verse 19**, Esau is referred to as Edom. Historians tell us Edom evolved into Rome, the perpetual enemy of Israel. Then in **verse 20**, reference is made to "the sons of Seir" which was a large ancient nation. Esau's children overcame them because HaShem gave Seir to them. Torah doesn't record how it happened. It is said this was a "hidden miracle". The bottom line is this, the Seirites were the original inhabitants of Seir, but it was HaShem's will for them to lose it to the descendants of Esau.

Verse 31 begins with "Now these are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before a king reigned over the Children of Israel." Torah lists eight Edomite kings who reigned before the first Israelite king.

There are two schools of thought concerning this matter.

1. The eight Edomite kings reigned up to the time of Moses. He, as the savior and leader of Israel, had the status of a king.
2. The passage is prophetic, giving names of eight Edomite kings who were destined to reign in future years, prior to Saul, the first king of Israel.

The second makes more sense to me when one considers the prophecy HaShem gave to **Rivkah/Rebecca** (**B'resheet/Genesis 25:23**) concerning the two brothers would not be great at the same time. Consequently, when Esau had kings, Israel had none, and when Israel rose up, Esau declined and his kings were defeated by Israel. For the last 2,000 years, Esau's offspring, in their various manifestations, have held sway and the Hebrew people have been exiled from their land

and former glory. In time to come (May it be soon, Holy One), this prophetic assurance: “Then the victorious will ascend Mount Tziyon to rule over Mount ‘Esav, but the kingship will belong to Adonai.” (**‘Ovadyah/Obadiah 1:21**) will be fulfilled. The Savior will ascend to Mount Zion to render judgment upon those who trace their greatness to the mountains of Esau and the kingdom will be HaShem’s. Hallelujah!!! Amen!!!

VaYislach ~ וַיִּשְׁלַח ~ He sent

Haftarah: Hoshea/Hosea 11:7~12:12; ‘Ovadyah/Obadiah 1-21

The connection between our parashah and the first part of our haftarah is made in **Hoshea/Hosea 12:4 & 5**, which are **verses 3 & 4** in most Bibles. Torah tells us Ya’akov fought with an angel and won; he wept and pleaded with him. Why is the prophet Hoshea reminding his people about the wrestling match with the angel?

At this point in time, Isra’el had fallen into a state of severe idol worship. Although the Northern Kingdom (House of Isra’el) was politically and militarily very successful; she was blind to her true state of being. She was in desolate spiritual poverty.

I believe Hoshea wanted to remind his people that although Ya’akov had considerable livestock and his large family, he was restless and had a lack of genuine peace. It was not until his wrestling match when he surrendered his fear and struggle and had a change of heart. It would take a similar change of heart, a genuine surrendering of themselves to bring about the change necessary for them.

The second part of our haftarah is **‘Ovadyah/Obadiah** which is all of 21 verses long. The subject matter is HaShem’s wrath against Esau and his descendants, the Edomites. We are told this vision was left for ‘Ovadyah for two reasons:

1. He was a descendant of an Edomite proselyte and . . .
2. Obadiah was the exact opposite of Esav

Esau lived among two righteous people, Yitz’chak and Rivkah, but he did not learn from them. ‘Ovadyah, on the other hand, was around two of the most wicked people on the face of the earth, King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, but he remained righteous. What is more, at a time when the king and queen murdered nearly all of the prophets of HaShem, ‘Ovadyah risked his life to shelter and feed many surviving prophets; some say as many as one hundred.

Edom begins as a small, insignificant kingdom to the south of Eretz Yisrael. It enjoyed the sufferings of its “cousin”, instead of feeling compassion for them. Then, in a vision of the future, ‘Ovadyah turns to the Roman Empire and its barbaric treatment of the Jews under its control. True to Isaac’s blessing, Rome lived by the sword and relished greatly the Jewish bloodshed.

‘Ovadyah/Obadiah, the prophet foretells Edom/Esav’s judgment and destruction. **Verse 10** says the judgment is the result of violence against **Ya’akov/Jacob**. The Hebrew word for **violence** is **hamas**. **Verse 12** says Edom enjoyed seeing Ya’akov’s distress. Could this be speaking especially of the time of Jacob’s trouble? **Verse 15** seems to point to this time frame since it speaks of the

Day of Judgment (Day of Adonai). This verse also says, “. . . your dealings will come back on your own head.” **Verse 16** says they will be as if they never existed. “The house of Ya’akov will repossess their rightful inheritance” (**verse 17**). The time for the “two sticks” to come together seems to appear in **verse 18** which is a reference to **Yechezk’el / Ezekiel 37:16**. Notice the Northern Kingdom (Joseph in this case) joins Ya’akov (Judah and his companions Israel from **Yechezk’el/Ezekiel 37** above). HaShem uses the Two Houses to administer His judgment on Esav. **Verses 19-21** detail the locations of the Northern and Southern Kingdom’s land possession. The end of the captivity of the Northern Kingdom is tied directly to this event (**verse 20**). Finally, the Kingdom is the L~rd’s (end of the End Times).

However, Edom will be repaid in kind. On Mount Zion there shall be a remnant. Despite all its suffering and persecutions, Israel and its land will survive and Edom will be cast down. Israel will return to its land and its Temple Mount. It will judge Edom for its horrors and all the world will know the kingdom will be HaShem’s.

I believe the day is coming soon when we will have to make a decision which will affect our lives forever.

VaYislach ~ וַיִּשְׁלַח ~ He sent

B’rit Hadashah: 1st Corinthians 5:1-13; Revelation 7:1-12

1st Corinthians 5:1-13

Whoa! Right way, we see the correlation between our Torah Portion and this reading. According to **B’resheet/Genesis 35:22**, Re’uven did this very thing!!! He went into Bilhah’s tent and slept with her, at least that’s what the scripture says. Apparently, this practice was even condemned by pagans; a man living with his stepmother and essentially, Bilhah would have been one of Re’uven’s stepmothers. Oy Vey!!!!

Revelation 7:1-12 I love **Revelation 7**!!! I love it SO much because it spells out VERY clearly who the 144,000 servants of HaShem are, standing before the throne of an Almighty G~d, blessed be He. It is **NOT** the “church” as some of us have been taught. It says pointedly they will be from every tribe of the people of Isra’el except the tribe of Dan.

Verse 9 also points to the time of Sukkot according to some Torah teachers. They have come from the entire world (after being led by the 144,000 out of the wilderness of the people?!)

In his Revelation study, Monte Judah believes the 144,000 will do the job of the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night, from the first exodus with regard to the fulfillment of the “greater exodus” prophecy in **Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah 16:14-16**.

Our corresponding Psalm for this Torah Portion is: Psalm 140

Next week’s lesson: Parashah #9

VaYeshev ~ וַיֵּשֶׁב ~ He continued living

Torah: B’resheet/Genesis 37:1~40:23

Haftarah: ‘Amos/Amos 2:6~3:8

B’rit Hadashah: Acts 7:9-16