

# VAYISHLACH - GENESIS

*- And He Sent -*

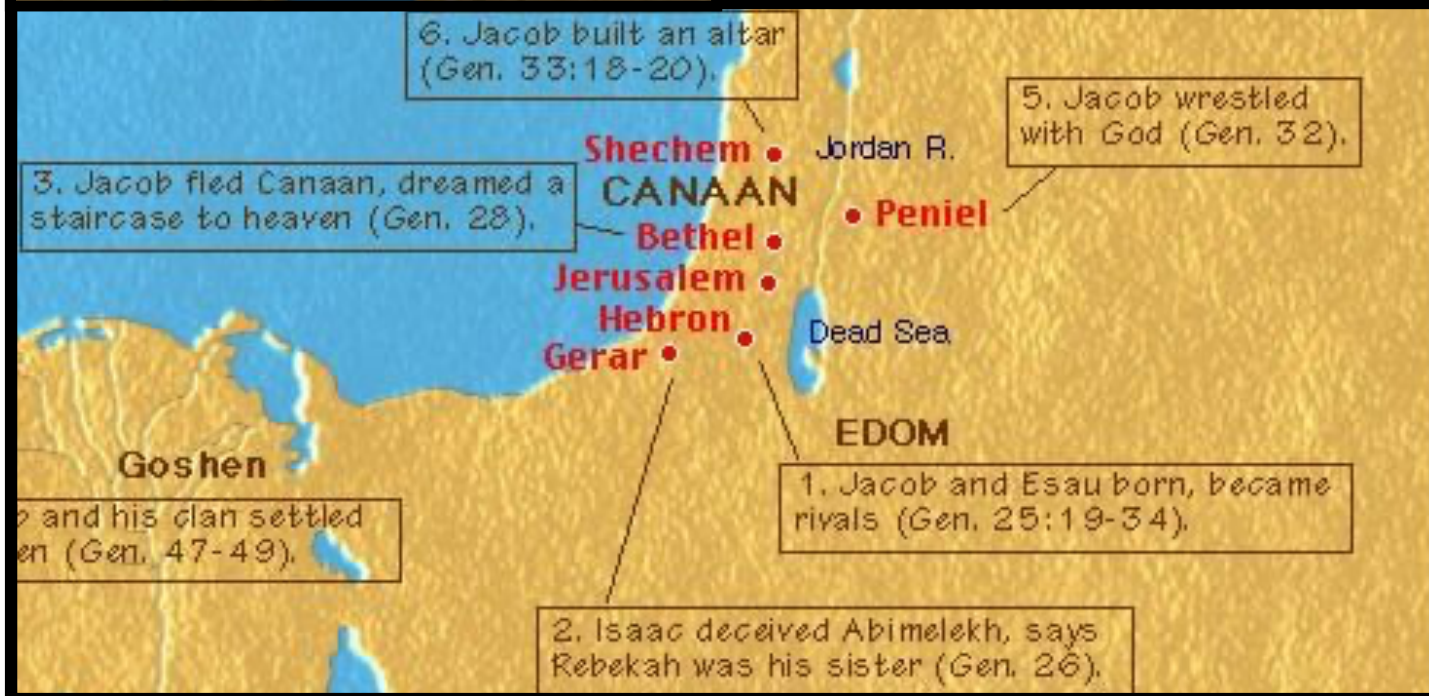
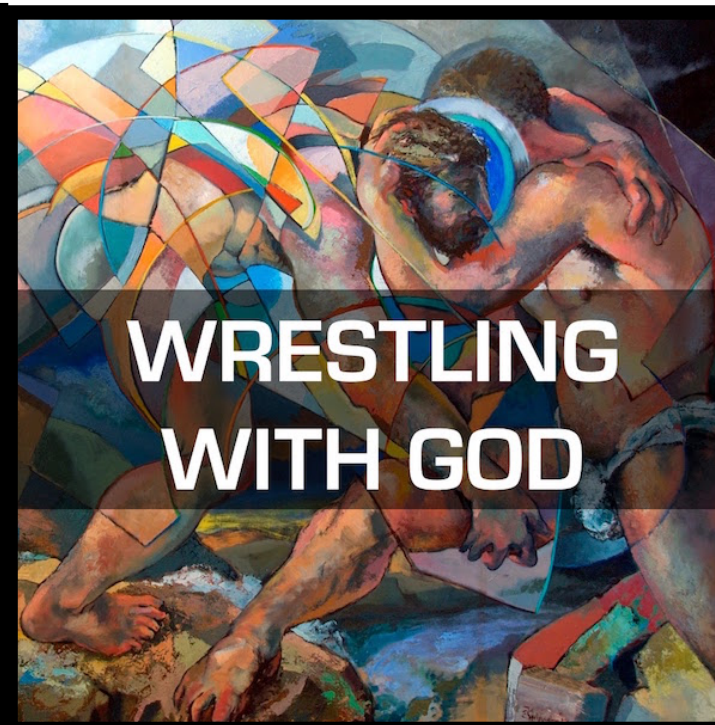
Dan Stolebarger - Holy Ground Explorations  
Chapter 32-36

# INTRODUCTION



## PARASHAT VAYISHLACH - 'And He Sent'

Jacob represented a spiritual strength and ability to trod forward and continue in spite of all obstacles his life journey.



<sup>3</sup> Jacob sent messengers in front of him to Esau, his brother, **to the land of Seir, the field of Edom.** <sup>4</sup> He commanded them, saying, "This is what you shall tell my lord, Esau: 'This is what your servant, Jacob, says. I have lived as a foreigner with Laban, and stayed until now. <sup>5</sup> I have cattle, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find favor in your sight.'" <sup>6</sup> **The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him."** <sup>7</sup> Then Jacob was greatly afraid and was distressed.

Note that *midrash* states that Esau named the place he lived *Seir* ("goat") to remember how his brother wore the skin of goats when he stole his blessing by tricking Isaac into blessing him.

Vs7 - Here the Hebrew term for afraid refers to fright or terror.

"Jacob had just been delivered from Laban, but he was oppressed by another load: **the dread of Esau was upon him. He had wronged his brother; and you cannot do a wrong without being haunted by it afterwards.**" (Spurgeon) As Jacob had no strength before Esau because of guilt, many Christians today are also hindered by memory of their past sins and failings.

9 **Jacob said, "God** of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, Yahweh, **who said to me,** 'Return to your country, and to your relatives, **and I will do you good,'**  
10 I am not worthy of the least of all the loving kindnesses, and of all the truth, which you have shown to your servant; for with just my staff I crossed over this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. 11 **Please deliver me from the hand of my brother,** from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and strike me and the mothers with the children. 12 **You said,** 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which can't be counted because there are so many.'"

The headstrong - get er done - Jacob was no completely dependent upon God. He's doing his best to butter his brother up and to minimize the impact but the bottom-line is that Jacob is begging God to remember his promises etc.



**24 Jacob was left alone, and wrestled with a man there until the breaking of the day.** <sup>25</sup> When he saw that he didn't prevail against him, the man touched the hollow of his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was strained as he wrestled.

<sup>26</sup> The man said, "Let me go, for the day breaks."

**Jacob said, "I won't let you go unless you bless me."**

<sup>27</sup> He said to him, "What is your name?"

He said, "Jacob".

**28 He said, "Your name will no longer be called Jacob, but Israel;** for you have fought with God and with men, and have prevailed."

<sup>29</sup> Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name."

He said, "Why is it that you ask what my name is?" So he blessed him there.

Note that both names will be used interchangeably from now on: Israel has two meaning: 1) One who struggles with God and 2) One who is a prince with God.

Jacob had been struggling all his life (at his birth in the womb; with Esau and later with Laban ... and now with God!). From this point on, this son of Isaac will be called **Jacob** twice as often as he is called **Israel**. Apparently, there was still plenty of the old man left in Jacob.

<sup>30</sup> **Jacob called the name of the place Peniel;** for he said, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." <sup>31</sup> **The sun rose on him as he passed over Peniel, and he limped because of his thigh.**

Jacob was reduced to the place where all he could do was to hold on to the LORD with everything he had. Jacob could not fight anymore, but he could hold on. That is not a bad place to be.

Tozer: Make sure those you choose to follow are walking with a limp

28 He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed."

**Troy Anderson** – Israel truly is a nation of people that has, and continues to this day, to struggle with God and with men. There is nothing easy in this world and it is not meant to be, God builds character in us through tribulation and faith. To wrestle and struggle is to build character, but to deny, be complacent, whine and complain is laziness and quitting on yourself and those around you.



Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau was coming, and with him four hundred men. He divided the children between Leah, Rachel, and the two servants.

<sup>2</sup> He put the servants and their children in front, Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph at the rear. <sup>3</sup> **He himself passed over in front of them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.**

<sup>4</sup> **Esau ran to meet him, embraced him, fell on his neck, kissed him, and they wept.**

Note that Jacob is not last - the Israeli IDF way is that leaders lead.

I think it is noteworthy that Jacob stood between Esau and his family! The man who now would walk with a limp now stands in the gap!

In that culture, one never accepted a gift from an enemy, only from a friend. To accept the gift was to accept the friendship.

<sup>16</sup> So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. <sup>17</sup> **Jacob traveled to Succoth**, built himself a house, and made shelters for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

<sup>18</sup> **Jacob came in peace to the city of Shechem**, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Paddan Aram; and encamped before the city. <sup>19</sup> He bought the parcel of ground where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for one hundred pieces of money. <sup>20</sup> **He erected an altar there, and called it El Elohe Israel.**

Jacob retraces his grandparents route into Canaan through Shechem

El Elohe Israel = The mighty one; God of Israel

# 34

<sup>24</sup> All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor, and to Shechem his son; and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. <sup>25</sup> **On the third day, when they were sore, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword, came upon the unsuspecting city, and killed all the males.**

[Genesis 34](#) does not mention God once, and is one of the most sordid chapters in Israel's history.

[Genesis 35](#) mentions God over and over again, more than 10 times, plus 11 more times in names such as **Bethel** and **Israel**.

22-23 “.....Only on this condition will the men agree to dwell with us to become one people—when every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. Will not their livestock, their property and all their beasts be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will dwell with us.”

**Andrew Suedkamp** - The Hivites were not godly people and therefore didn't have the ability to seek God's counsel. Had they been different and sought God's opinion, maybe they would have been warned of the scheme against them. We need to be careful when we agree to certain terms that we don't allow our ambition to over-ride our need to bring things in front of the Lord and seek His counsel and His will.

**God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and live there.** Make there an altar to God, who appeared to you when you fled from the face of Esau your brother."

<sup>2</sup> Then Jacob said to his household, and to all who were with him, "**Put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves**, change your garments.

<sup>3</sup> Let's arise, and go up to Bethel. I will make there an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me on the way which I went."

After twenty years of hard labor working for his treacherous uncle, Jacob returned safely to the Land of Israel. Jacob was successful in appeasing his brother Esau, and finally made it back to Beth El.

Beth El was the place where, as he set out to leave the Land of Israel, Jacob dreamt of a ladder reaching to the Heavens, of angels and God's promise to watch over him. Now Jacob fulfilled his twenty-year-old promise and erected a pillar in God's Name, in Beth El.

9 God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan Aram, and blessed him.  
10 God said to him, "Your name is Jacob. Your name shall not be Jacob any more, but your name will be Israel." **He named him Israel.** 11 God said to him, "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations will be from you, and kings will come out of your body. 12 **The land which I gave to Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you, and to your offspring after you I will give the land.**" 13 God went up from him in the place where he spoke with him. 14 **Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he spoke with him, a pillar of stone.** He poured out a drink offering on it, and poured oil on it. 15 Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him "Bethel".

Temple Zero / Rock and Oil



<sup>16</sup> They traveled from Bethel. There was still some distance to come to Ephrath, and **Rachel travailed**. She had hard labor. <sup>17</sup> When she was in hard labor, the midwife said to her, "Don't be afraid, for now you will have another son."

<sup>18</sup> **As her soul was departing (for she died), she named him Benoni, but his father named him Benjamin.** <sup>19</sup> **Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Ephrath (also called Bethlehem).** <sup>20</sup> **Jacob set up a pillar on her grave. The same is the Pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.**

Rachel weeping for her children ... both for those taken to Babylon as well as the babes that were killed by Herod

<sup>21</sup> Israel traveled, and spread his tent beyond the tower of Eder. <sup>22</sup> While Israel lived in that land, **Reuben went and lay with Bilhah**, his father's concubine, and Israel heard of it.

Reuben - Maybe he felt slighted by Benjamin's name ... by sleeping with his fathers concubine, he was asserting that he would succeed his father. Ironically this very action caused him to lose the blessing he desired.

9-10 Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name." So He called his name Israel.

**Glen Iverson** – After Jacob wrestled with God in chapter 32, God renamed him Israel. God appears to Jacob again here and reminds him that his name is now Israel. God appearing to Jacob\Israel is an example of a Theophany, God appearing as a man to him and pointing out the promise that was given to Abram and Isaac. Jacob has really grown in faith since he deceived Isaac for the birthright from Esau, so much that he says to his household to 'put away the foreign gods that are among you, purify yourselves and change your garments'. This isn't how Jacob acted a few chapters ago. Our journey in faith is a process, we should be growing in our faith so that our character changes as a result of our walk with God. Our faith should show evidence (good fruit).

# MUSINGS FROM MOSHE



Yaacov represented a spiritual strength and ability to trod forward and continue in spite of all obstacles his life journey.

The struggle that ensued with the angel was in fact a struggle that was flaring with in his very soul,"

And Jacob was left alone. The commentator the Bnei Yissaschar understands from this encounter that at critical moments in our individual or corporate spiritual paths we are destined to confront a point of complete aloneness. In such times we are thrust into situations wherein we are left disconnected from our environment, our past, our destiny. We are simply left with ourselves and dealing with the turmoil within ourselves. All this equipped only with our delicate balance of strengths and weaknesses. It is in that struggle that we find the empowerment to move forward.

It is only due to the strength and tenacity represented by the name Yaakov that we will truly achieve the destiny declared by the name Israel.

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Andrew Suedkamp**

**Glen Iverson**

**Troy Anderson**

**Sharon Stolebarger**

**The Complete Jewish Study Bible - David Stern**

**Tanach - STONE EDITION - Rabbi Nosson Scherman**

**Hebrew4Christians.com**

**Nelson NKJV Study Bible**

**Moshe Shorashim**

