

# Parasha 8: Vayishlach (He Sent)

## B'resheet/Genesis 32:4 – 36:43

\*All Scripture References from The Orthodox Jewish Bible- Referred to as OJB- unless otherwise noted

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Ya'akov/Jacob has come to the end of his exile. So many things have happened to him. Yet, the most serious test he has ever faced is about to come his way. YHWH has told him to return to the land of his avot/fathers, but to do so means that he must face his estranged brother Esav/Esau. This journey is no small trek. It will take Ya'akov/Jacob two years to return!

In the dealings of YHWH in our life, there is one constant principle: WE CANNOT REACH THE NEXT LEVEL IN OUR DESTINY, UNTIL WE HAVE PASSED EACH TEST THAT PRECEDES IT. Ya'akov/Jacob left behind his brother over twenty years ago. The closer he comes to The Land, the thing he fears the most will soon be directly before him. Now, he has no choice but to face his brother. Esav/Esau will have had twenty two years to let his hatred for Ya'akov/Jacob smolder. In Ya'akov's/Jacob's mind, there is seemingly no good end to their meeting.

What we find here in Ya'akov/Jacob, is that there is still a *'spiritual root'* within his heart. There still lurks a *'spirit of fear'*. He has *'heard'* YHWH's promises. He has *'seen'* His faithfulness over these twenty years, but notice, that Ya'akov/Jacob still has not *'entered into'* a real relationship with YHWH. In fact he calls YHWH,

***“And Ya'akov [Jacob] said, O Elohei Avi Avraham [The Mighty One of my father Avraham], and Elohei Avi Yitzchak [The Mighty One of my father Yitz'chak/Isaac]...”***  
***(B'resheet/Genesis 32:9a OJB- definitions mine)***

Notice, that he still does not say that YHWH is *'my Mighty One'*! This whole encounter with Esav/Esau is designed to bring Ya'akov/Jacob to the *'final end of himself'*. For all of his ingenuity which he has used in the past, which has served him well, the thought of facing Esav/Esau negates it all. The Torah gives us this assessment,

***“Then Ya'akov [Jacob] was GREATLY AFRAID AND DISTRESSED...”***  
***(B'resheet/Genesis 32:7a OJB- emphasis/definitions mine)***

Then, in his prayer to YHWH he says of Esav/Esau,

***“Save me, now, from the yad achi [my brother’s hand], from the yad [hand of] Esav [Esau]; FOR I FEAR HIM, lest he will come and attack me, em with banim [mothers with children].”***  
***(B’resheet/Genesis 32:11 OJB- emphasis/definitions mine)***

Fear still drives Ya’akob/Jacob. Why? Because all he has to depend on is his own ingenuity. He knows that the threat which Esav/Esau brings is too great. In desperation, he cries out to YHWH, pleading for His intervention. He reminds YHWH of His promises to deliver him, and bring him back to Cana’an safely. It is a good beginning, but something must happen deep within Ya’akob/Jacob if he is to pass this test.

## **The Mashiach: YHWH’s Only Provision**

We did not spend much time in our last parasha looking at the dream which Ya’akob/Jacob had while he ‘*slept on the rock*’. However, that experience, along with the one which Ya’akob/Jacob is about to have, ‘*all speak of the same thing*’. THE ONLY ANSWER YHWH HAS FOR ANY NEED IN OUR LIFE IS MORE OF HIS SON! Our need may find itself in many different expressions (salvation, finances, healing...etc.), but they may all be summed up in our need of a Savior, a Redeemer. HE ALONE IS THE ONE WHO CAN MEET THOSE NEEDS. Remember the words which Rav Sha’ul spoke to the Galatians who found themselves in such a great crisis of faith?

***“My yeladim [children], for whom again I suffer chevlei leydah (birth pains) until Moshiach is FORMED IN YOU,”*** (Galatians 4:19 OJB- emphasis/definitions mine)

We always think, so many times, that the answer is a ‘*thing*’. The answer is in fact, a SOMEONE! It is MASHIACH YESHUA HIMSELF. It is the formation of His ‘*character*’, which is the ‘*fruit of the spirit*’. (Gal. 5:22-23) None of us are capable to live the life we are called to as YHWH’s children. This is why the Ruach HaKodesh/Spirit of YHWH’s Holiness was sent. It’s not just about being ‘*filled with the Ruach*’. It’s about our blessed Mashiach, being able to express Himself IN US and THROUGH US by His indwelling Ruach HaKodesh/Spirit of Holiness.

Who was the ‘*ladder*’ in Ya’akob’s/Jacob’s dream that night? Upon Whom were the angels ‘*ascending*’ and ‘*descending*’? Our blessed Master Yeshua tells us in the Besorah/Gospel of Yochanon/John. After His discussion with Natan’el/Nathaniel, our Master relates these words,

***“In reply, Yehoshua [Yeshua] said to Natan’el [Nathaniel], Because I told you that I watched you beneath the etz hate’edah [fig tree], do you have emunah (faith)? Greater than these things you will see.***

***And he says to Natan’el [Nathaniel], Omein, omein [Truly, truly] I say to you, you will see Shomayim [The Heavens] having been opened and malachim (angels) of Hashem [YHWH] ascending and descending on the Ben HaAdam (Son of Man...i.e., Moshiach).”***  
***(Yochanon/John 1:50-51 OJB- definitions mine)***

The imagery was inescapable. Those who heard these words knew exactly to what they referred. Master Yeshua IS the LADDER let down from heaven. He IS the means by which heaven supplies the earth. The angels of The Mighty One ASCEND, and DESCEND upon Him! Ya’akob/Jacob met the Mashiach that night at Beit’el in the form of the LADDER!

The Rabbis say that *'the ladder'* is the Torah. This is true in the pashat/literal sense. Yet, in the *'sod level'*, the *'mystery/hidden'*, or *'shadow sense'*, it points to our blessed Rebbe Yeshua. HE IS THE LIVING TORAH! In the Messianic Writings (**Mattityahu/Matthew to Hitgalut/Revelation**), all that the written Torah promised is PERSONIFIED in our Mashiach Yeshua. THE TORAH BRINGS HEAVEN AND EARTH TOGETHER. The Living Torah/Yeshua HaMashiach brings our heart, and heaven TOGETHER through the indwelling of the Ruach HaKodesh/Spirit of Holiness.

## A Close Encounter With The Mashiach

Ya'akov/Jacob had heard of YHWH through his fathers, Abraham and Yitz'chak/Isaac He had encountered, spiritually, both YHWH as Father, and His *'manifestation'* as Son in the vision that night in Beit'el. The word for *'stone'* in Hebrew is *'even'*. **[Spelled in Hebrew; alef-bet-nun, אבן- read right to left]** It is a combination of two words; one for *'father'* [*'ab'* from which we get *'abba'*] and the other for *'son'* [*which is 'ben'*]. However, it is not enough to *'hear about'* or even to have a *'vision'*. THERE MUST BE AN UP-CLOSE ENCOUNTER WITH YHWH'S SON, THE MASHIACH. It must be one that gets to the heart. This is what is about to happen to Ya'akov/Jacob.

*“And Ya'akov [Jacob] was left by himself; and there wrestled an ish [Man] with him until the shachar (dawn, sunup).*

*And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he struck his hip socket; so Ya'akov's [Jacob's] hip socket dislocated while he wrestled with him.*

*And he said, Let me go, for shachar [dawn] breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, unless thou make a berakah [blessing] upon me.*

*And he said unto him, What is shemecha [your name]? And he said, Ya'akov [Jacob].*

*And he said, Shimcha [your name] shall be called no more Ya'akov [Jacob], but Yisroel: for sarita im Elohim (yisrah = to prevail, El=Mighty One = Yisroel) ye have striven with Elohim [The Mighty One] and with anashim [men], and hast overcome.*

*And Ya'akov [Jacob] asked him, and said, Tell me, now, shemecha [Your Name]. And he said, Why is it that thou dost ask after shmi [My Name]? And he made a berakhah [blessing] upon him there.*

*And Ya'akov [Jacob] called the shem [name] of the makom (place) Peniel (Face of G-d/The Mighty One): for I have seen Elohim [The Mighty One] panim el panim [face to face], and my nefesh [soul-life] is saved.*

*And as he passed over Penuel the shemesh [sun] rose upon him, and he limped upon his hip” (B'resheet/Genesis 32:24-31 OJB- definitions mine)*

We are told that at some point during the night, a MAN comes to Ya'akov/Jacob, and they began to wrestle. In fact, we are told that for a period of time, Ya'akov/Jacob even prevailed! Then, comes the morning light, and the MAN tries to get Ya'akov/Jacob to *'release Him'*. However, Ya'akov/Jacob, determined as ever, is not willing to do so without a *'blessing'*. That *'blessing'* would change Ya'akov/Jacob to the very depths of his being.

The MAN does bless Ya'akov/Jacob, but first He asks Ya'akov/Jacob what his name is? Ya'akov/Jacob tells the MAN. In turn, the MAN gives Ya'akov/Jacob another name... *'Yisrael'*. He says, *'for you have striven [wrestled] with The Mighty One, and with men, and have prevailed'*. In Torah, a *'change of name'* signifies a *'change in nature'*. This *'change'* is *'outwardly typified'* by the limp Ya'akov/Jacob was left with, after the MAN *'touched his thigh'*.

The *'thigh'* signifies *'strength'* - *'human strength'*. Ya'akob's/Jacob's source of *'fleshly strength'*, which he had learned to depend on, had suffered a devastating blow. Now, he would find a *'new source'* of strength was made available to him. THIS STRENGTH WAS IN ANOTHER.

Who is this MAN? HE IS YHWH'S MASHIACH. HE IS OUR BLESSED MASTER YESHUA. This is hinted at, when Ya'akob/Jacob asked the MAN what His name was. The MAN deflected the question. It is not time to reveal the *'Name of the Mashiach'*. But, He leaves His MARK ...the MARK of the *'execution stake'*. The thigh upon which Ya'akob/Jacob limped, would forever serve as a reminder of the day of that *'great transference'*. The POWER of THE MAN, became in measure, the POWER of Ya'akob/Jacob. The new name, YISRAEL, is YHWH's glorious beginning of moving past a CHOSEN MAN, to a CHOSEN NATION. All this, has come through the intervention of the Mashiach!

We are given further credence to the fact that this is no ordinary MAN, or *'ordinary angel'* by Ya'akob's/Jacob's words, immediately following the event. He named the place *'Peni'el'*. Ya'akob/Jacob said, I have SEEN Elohim/The Mighty One, FACE TO FACE. This MAN is our blessed MASTER YESHUA, who, in the TaNaKh/Hebrew Scriptures, appeared on and off as a *'temporary manifestation'* of YHWH. Now, since His becoming *'flesh'* through Miryam/Mary, His mother, Master Yeshua IS the PERFECT, and ENDURING/CONTINUOUS MANIFESTATION of YHWH in *'human form'*. Just as the Messianic Scriptures/Kethuvim HaNotzrim/Writings of the Nazarenes proclaim.

*“In many and various drakhim (ways) Hashem [YHWH] in amolike times (olden times) spoke to the Avot [fathers] by the Nevi'im [prophets].*

*At the Ketz HaYamim [End of Days/Latter Days], Hashem [YHWH] spoke to us by HaBen [The Son], whom He appointed Bechor (heir/firstborn) of the Bechorah [inheritance], Yoresh Kol (Heir of All Things), through whom also Hashem [YHWH] BARAH ES HASHOMAYIM V'ES HA'ARETZ [CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH];*

*Who being the Shechinah zohar (brilliance) of Hashem [YHWH] and the exact impress and demut [image] of Hashem's [YHWH's] essential nature, being, and reality, and sustaining everything by his Dvar HaKo'ach [Word of The Power], after he made tihur (purification) of chatta'im (sins), sat down at LIMIN (“the right hand”) of the Majesty on High”  
(Ivrim/Hebrews 1:1-3 OJB- emphasis/definitions mine)*

Ya'akob/Jacob follows this with his exclamation that, having seen Elohim/The Mighty One FACE TO FACE, he did not die! Ya'akob/Jacob did not need a name. He KNEW that somehow he had *'touched'* YHWH in a way he didn't fully understand...AND HE LIVED! Now, The Mighty One of his fathers had become his Mighty One too!

## Peniel And Penuel?

Before we go further, I would like to make a comment. Ya'akob/Jacob uses a variance in the names concerning the place of his encounter with The Mighty One. In our passage quoted above in B'reshet/Genesis 32:30-31, the Hebrew Torah uses two different spellings of Ya'akob's/Jacob's testimony of having seen the *'face of The Mighty One'*. [a number of the English translations of the Scriptures record this...some do not] In verse 30, Ya'akob/Jacob says, that he has seen The Mighty One *'face to face'*, and he called the place *'Peniel'*. In the very next verse, the Torah states, that when Ya'akob/Jacob got ready to leave that place, he calls the name of the place *'Penuel'*. Why the difference in spelling?

The difference in the spelling of the two words is an 'i' in English, which is the letter 'yod' in Hebrew for 'Peniel'. The change to 'Penuel' in English comes using the letter 'u' in place of the letter 'i'. In Hebrew, the exchange is with the letters 'yod' י, and 'waw/vav' ו, thus making 'Peniel' - פניאל become 'Penuel' - פנואל. The change between the two, does not change the meaning of the words, only 'how' they are pronounced. However, in Hebrew, and more importantly in the Torah, YHWH DOES NOTHING WITHOUT A PARTICULAR PURPOSE IN MIND.

To understand the reason for the 'change', we must understand what the letters in Hebrew point toward. The 'yod' י in ancient Paleo Hebrew is a picture of a 'hand' י. It is also the 'first letter' in the spelling of the 'Memorial Name' of The Mighty One, יהוה/YHWH. The letter 'waw/vav' ו in Hebrew is representative of a 'man'. The 'waw/vav' ו being the 'sixth letter' of the Hebrew Alef-Bet, and the fact that 'man' was created on the 'sixth day'. (see B'reshet/Genesis 1:26-31) However, the 'waw/vav' ו in ancient Paleo Hebrew, is also pictured as a 'hook' - װ. A 'hook', or 'nail', which is used to 'join' something together. Now, we are coming 'close' to what the Torah is 'trying to show us' in the 'change of the name' of the place where Ya'akob/Jacob wrestled with the Angel of the Mighty One from, 'Peniel' to 'Penuel'.

If you will remember, that Ya'akob/Jacob in our parasha does not refer to The Mighty One as 'my', but as 'his fathers' Mighty One. Ya'akob/Jacob has not come to a 'personal relationship' based on 'revelation' in his own heart over these past twenty years. That is about to change. Something does indeed happen in the wrestling that takes place between himself, and the Angel of The Mighty One. Ya'akob's/Jacob's 'change' in identifying the place of this wrestling, and his 'passing' from that place, is testimony to what has happened.

In the wrestling during that night, the yod י in 'Peniel/פניאל' was the place where the 'hand' י of YHWH was brought into Ya'akob's/Jacob's life. In turn, the 'waw/vav' ו the 'hook' װ brought the י 'hand' of YHWH down into Ya'akob's/Jacob's realm, resulting in the 'hand' י opening, and giving 'revelation' of Himself to Ya'akob's/Jacob's heart! Now, the 'light of heaven/the sun' [Son], is risen in Ya'akob's/Jacob's heart. This is signified by the wording of verse 31,

*“And as he passed over Penuel the shemesh [sun/Son] rose upon him...”*

The light (revelation) of heaven (the sun/Son) rose upon Ya'akob/Jacob. Thus, there is the 'change in the name' of the place from 'Peniel' to 'Penuel'. Ya'akob/Jacob 'transitioned' in his heart from 'one who wrestles with The Mighty One and men'; to 'Yisrael', a 'prince who overcomes'! The root of the name 'Yisrael' is the word 'sara'. It means, not only 'one who wrestles', but 'one who prevails', AND becomes a 'prince'. In all of Ya'akob's/Jacob's wrestling with men, with YHWH, and the situations he had been through, he would, in time, become a PRINCE WHO OVERCOMES!

THERE IS NO WRESTLING WITH THE MIGHTY ONE THAT IS NOT COSTLY. All of our 'transitions' in the ruach/spirit mean, that not only do we GAIN something 'from' YHWH, but we also LOSE something 'in' our own soul-life, that 'makes room' for that heavenly acquisition. This is why the 'rest of the above verse says,

*“...and he limped upon his hip.”*

The 'natural/human strength' of Ya'akob's/Jacob's soul-life had been touched by the 'execution stake' that night. The 'change of his name' from 'Ya'akob/Jacob' to 'Yisrael' was testimony to that. There was a 'reduction' in Ya'akob's/Jacob's ability to 'trust in his own strength'...HE LIMPED. But, there was also an ADDING TO of YHWH's power, resurrection life...THE SUN/SON ROSE UPON HIM. There is 'no limitation' in that life. Ya'akob/Jacob never forgot that experience. He was a 'marked' man. So, this is the meaning of the 'change in the name' of that place from 'Peniel' to 'Penuel'. There is an interesting verse in the book of the navi/prophet Yeshayahu/Isaiah. It says at the end,

*"...the lame take the prey." (Yeshayahu/Isaiah 33:23b KJV)*

So truly, what is IMPOSSIBLE with men, becomes POSSIBLE with the Mighty One. To quote Rav Sha'ul,

*"And HaAdon [The Master] said to me, "My Chesed [Grace] is ad kahn (sufficient for the purpose, enough) for you, for My ko'ach (power) is perfected in weakness. With lev samei'ach [rejoicing of heart] therefore will I boast in my weaknesses that the gevurah [power] of Moshiach might be a shelter over me." (11 Corinthians 12:9 OJB- definitions mine)*

Beloved, what we have read, is what YHWH is out to do in all of our lives, if we are truly to know the life that expresses His glory. He is not afraid of our stubbornness. He is not fearful of our potential for sinfulness. He is bringing us all to our own 'Peniel', in order to bring us THROUGH to the RISING OF HIS SON in our hearts, to our 'Penuel'. Amein!

## Ya'akob Passes The Test

Finally, Ya'akob/Jacob faces his greatest fear. He comes 'face to face' with his brother Esav/Esau. I'm sure it was one of the hardest things that Ya'akob/Jacob had ever done. Yet, he did it, and as a result, he re-entered Canaan. We won't take the time here to discuss that meeting. The Rabbi's say that there were things that Ya'akob/Jacob did in that encounter that did not serve him, or his descendants well. It is true, that even to this day, the descendants of Ya'akob/Jacob (Yisrael) are still at odds with Esav's/Esau's descendants (**the kingdom of Edom, which is present day Jordan**). However, Ya'akob/Jacob was allowed back into The Land. That return was itself not without blessing and cost.

YHWH appears to Ya'akob/Jacob again. In this encounter, He 'reinforces' the 'change of name', which he had been given by the MAN (The Mashiach) earlier. He also blesses Ya'akob/Jacob by passing the 'same blessing' given to Abraham, his grandfather, and his father Yitz'chak/Isaac to him. The promise of MULTIPLICITY was given. The promise that 'kings and nations will come forth from him' was also reiterated. Then, lastly, the promise of the PHYSICAL INHERITANCE of The Land being given to Ya'akob/Jacob, and his descendants is also included.

*"And Elohim [The Mighty One] appeared unto Ya'akov [Jacob] again, when he returned from Padan Aram, and made a berakhah [blessing] upon him. And Elohim [The Mighty One] said unto him, Shimcha [Your Name] is Ya'akov; shimcha [your name] shall not be called any more Ya'akov [Jacob], but Yisroel shall be shemecha [your name]; and He called shmo [his name] Yisroel.*

*And Elohim said unto him, I am El Shaddai [The Lord Almighty/The Many Breasted One]; be fruitful and multiply; a Goy (nation) and a Kehal Goyim [Company/Assembly of Nations] shall be from thee, and Melechim [Kings] shall come out of thy loins; And HaAretz [The Land] which I gave Avraham and Yitzchak, to thee I will give it, and to thy zera [seed] after thee will I give HaAretz [The Land]. And Elohim [The Mighty One] went up from him in the makom [place] where He talked with him.” (B’resheet/Genesis 35:9-13 OJB- definitions mine)*

After this encounter, Raqu’el/Rachel begins to give birth, somewhere between Beit’el, and Ephratah. It doesn’t go well. Rachel dies giving birth to Ya’akob’s/Jacob’s twelfth son...Benyamin/Benjamin. He is the only one of Ya’akob’s/Jacob’s sons to be born in The Land. It is interesting to note, that it is not until this last son is born, that Ya’akob/Jacob is actually called by his new name ‘Yisrael’. (B’resheet/Genesis 35:21) With the birth of Benyamin/Benjamin, the ‘next step’ in YHWH’s ‘eternal purpose’ is ready. Now, the MAN gives place to the NATION. The INDIVIDUAL gives way to the CORPORATE FAMILY.

Yet, it is not without great cost. Ya’akob/Jacob loses the woman he so dearly, and passionately loved. Raqu’el/Rachel passes from the scene. There is another deep lesson that is being portrayed for us in the passing of Raqu’el/Rachel. In studying the Torah, we learn a very important principle that governs certain relationships...marriage being one of them. In the ‘She’bi’ktav/written Torah’, we learn that it is forbidden for a man to be married to two sisters. (see Wayikra/Leviticus 18:18) What may have been allowed ‘outside’ of The Land, ‘cannot be allowed’ once Ya’akob/Jacob has returned. The instructions of Torah must be fully observed there. So, Rachel is removed, in order to keep things within the ‘parameters’ of YHWH’s holiness.

Yitz’chak/Isaac, Ya’akob’s/Jacob’s father, also passes away in this parasha. So, even though Ya’akob/Jacob is allowed re-entry into The Land, there is a ‘cost’ involved. We, who are a part of the ‘returning house of Yosef-Ephraim’, have some things to learn along these lines too. As we are being ‘repatriated’ to our Yisraelite/Hebraic heritage, being ‘readied’ for our own ‘return to The Land’, and ‘full restoration of the Whole House of Yisrael’, there will be a ‘cost’ for us too. In our ‘exile’, ‘scattering’, and ‘regathering’, there is much chesed/grace being shown to us. YHWH does not expect us to become Torah giants overnight. However, as our ‘love for Him increases’, SO MUST OUR LOVE FOR HIS WAYS. We must set our hands to the plow, His Torah, and not look back to our former days of ignorance. (Luke 9:62) Now, is the time to begin moving our hearts, and lives, back into synch with Abba’s Torah. WHILE TORAH IS NOT LAW, IT IS NOT MERELY GOOD SUGGESTIONS EITHER! May we sh’mah (hear and obey), as the Ruach HaKodesh/Spirit of Holiness is teaching us our Abba’s loving ways. Amein.

We say the following blessing as we continue each week’s study of Torah:

***Chazak u’Baruch...  
Strength and Blessing!***