

וַיִּשְׁלַח

VaYishlach

Genesis 32:4-36:43: the transformation of *Yaakov*
Haftarah: Obadiah: G-d's judgment on *Esav*/Edom

Yaakov sent *vayishlach* וַיִּשְׁלַח messengers ahead of him to 'Esav his brother toward the land of Se'ir, the country of Edom. Genesis 32:4

The *Parasha* starts with *Yaakov* going to meet his brother *Esav* and ends with the burying of *Yitzchak* and the genealogy of *Esav*.

Yaakov is worried. As he is heading back to the Promised Land, he wants to be in peace with his brother. *Esav* comes with four hundreds armed men, obviously to attack *Yaakov* and take revenge. *Yaakov* realizes that he has to face the consequences of the scheme he used twenty years ago. He deceived his brother and his father to get the blessings, but was himself deceived by his step father *Lavan*, and still deceived him again to escape him.

Esav's revenge means the end of the divine promises and of the messianic mission. Under *Yaakov's* eyes the entire young Jewish nation is there, full of hope and life and the twelfth son still in *Rachel's* womb must be born in the Promised Land. It will be on Binyamin's territory that the Temple would be built due to the fact that, up to Jewish interpretation, Binyamin was the only child who did not bow down before *Esav*. We have seen that *Esav* was representing Rome (see *Parasha Toldot*). In the anguish of his heart, *Yaakov* cried out to G-d, to this G-d that he does not know yet but whom he had an insight when he was fleeing a first time twenty years ago.

This time he cannot flee and a fantastic, unreal fight between *Yaakov* and "a man" began during the night preceding the confrontation.

Who is this "man" ish **אִישׁ**?

Some say it would be *Esav's* angel fighting spiritually with *Yaakov* and who finally blessed him acknowledging that he was indeed the spiritual leader.

Others say it could be the tormented soul of *Yaakov* struggling with himself to be transformed in order to answer G-d's calling.

In the light of the *Brit Hachadasha (New Covenant)*, we can discern that this fight caused a new birth, the rebirth of the spiritual man called son of G-d because he is led by the *Ruach Hakodesh (Spirit of G-d)* as written in Romans 8:14:

All who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons.

This name "ish", man, reminds us the one *Yeshua* יֵשׁוּעַ used when calling Himself on earth: Son of Man.

We can understand that this fight is nothing else than the fight of our old nature until the dawn of a new day arises, when the Prince of Peace comes reign on our transformed hearts. This is a promise in the Scriptures for us:

Yes, we have the prophetic Word made very certain. You will do well to pay attention to it as to a light shining in a dark, murky place, until the Day dawns and the Morning Star rises in your hearts. 2 Peter 1:19

Yaakov has understood that in order to fulfill his messianic calling, he has to go through a transformation and become *Yisra-El*. The night ends on the victory of *Yisra-El* (Prince of G-d, fighter for G-d) on *Yaakov* (*the supplanter*), showing the way to future descendants. Yet, the blessing will be really full when the Morning Star will arise in the hearts of all of *Yisra-El*.

So for now the confrontation with *Esav* is avoided. However, History has witnessed many persecution from *Esav's* descendants towards *Yaakov's*. The second Temple was destroyed by Rome who sent the Jewish people to an exile from where they have not come back yet and persecutions followed during centuries. In relation to this, the *Haftarah* in *Obadiah* speaks about G-d's judgment on *Edom*.

After the reconciliation, *Esav* and *Yaakov* took two separate ways; *Esav* went to *Seir*, and *Yaakov* to *Sukkoth*.

Those are two directions, two destinies that end up by joining each other at the end time:

Seir **שֵׁעִיר**, is the name given to *Esav* in Genesis 27:11 but it also the one given to the goat who is sent away to the desert to carry the sins of the people:

The goat *sair* **שֵׁעִיר** will bear all their transgressions away to some isolated place, and he is to let the goat go in the desert.

Yaakov headed to another direction; *Sukkoth* **סֹכֹת**, or *the tabernacles*, which is the image of the Feast of *Sukkoth*. This Feast is the celebration of the rule of the *Mashiach* on earth, the coming back of the Great King and the joining of the nations to Jerusalem! This feast is also called *zman simchatenu*, the time of our joy!

However, it is not yet time for joy for *Yaakov*. He has not honoured the vow he made to G-d when he was fleeing before his brother. He has to give a name to the stone on which he rested on that night and call it the House of G-d. But the revelation was not ready.

The continuation of the story tells us about the painful events that occurred with *Dinah's* (*judgment*) rape and the early death of *Yaakov's* beloved wife, *Rachel*.

Then G-d appears again to *Yaakov* and tells him to go back to *Beth-El* and to build an altar:

God said to *Yaakov*, "Get up, go up to *Beth-El* and live *veshev* **וְשָׁב** there, and make there an altar to God, who appeared to you when you fled *Esav* your brother." Genesis 35:1

The word *live*, *shev* **שָׁב** or also *to sit and wait* and also the root of the word *return* is capital for the historical evolution of the Jewish people. All of *Yaakov's* people are getting ready to go back to this place

and the same purification is required as for the reception of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

And in the same way, G-d will reveal Himself to the whole people of Israel in the end times, as mentioned in *Zechariah*:

“And I will pour out on the house of David and on those living in *Yerushalayim* a spirit of grace and prayer; and they will look to me, whom they pierced.” They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son; they will be in bitterness on his behalf like the bitterness for a firstborn son”. *Zechariah 12:10*

G-d send *Yaakov* and his people back to the place, *makom*, where *Yaakov* had the revelation of the Gate of Heaven, the place of the *Kodesh Hakodashim* which entrance would be possible only through the perfect sacrifice of *Yeshua Hamashiach* Who offered Himself as the living Lamb, this “other” Lamb that *Avraham* had seen in a prophetic vision for the sacrifice of his son *Yitzchak*:

And the *parochet* in the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
Mark 15:38

So, brothers, we have confidence to use the way into the Holiest Place opened by the blood of *Yeshua*. He inaugurated it for us as a new and living way through the *parochet* by means of his flesh. *Hebrews 10:19-20*

Esav has taken some advance on his brother and come close to the *Kodesh Hakodashim* by receiving *Yeshua* as the Saviour. Thus, he foreshadowed the participation of the Gentiles to the salvation plan. We wait for the end of *Yaakov*'s night of exile and his coming back to G-d.

Furthermore, the burial of *Rachel* on the way to *Beth-Lechem* (*House of Bread*) shows the way to the Jewish people. We are longing for the final transformation of *Yisra-El* that will bring the full blessing to the whole world as written in *Romans 11:15*. Then together, Jews and Gentiles, we will celebrate the Feast of *Sukkoth* in Jerusalem and the glorious rule of the King of kings and the Lord of lords as promised:

Finally, everyone remaining from all the nations that came to attack *Yerushalayim* will go up every year to worship the king, *Adonai-Tzva'ot*, and to keep the festival of *Sukkoth*. *Zechariah 14:16*



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