

12-10-16 Message to Beit Adonai Yisroel – *VaYetse*
Torah Portion; Genesis 28:10-32:3
Haftarah: Hos 1:7 – 14:10
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: John 14:6-7

A Special Place for Prayer

Central question of this message: Are you fighting the battle with the right weapons?

We are in Parasha VaYetse. Its name comes from the first word of the passage which means “and he went out”.

Gen 28:10-11

10 Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 And he came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place.

חָרָנָה:	וַיֵּלֶךְ	מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע	יַעֲקֹב	וַיֵּצֵא	10
Haran.	and went toward	from Beer-sheba,	Jacob	And went out	
<u>2771</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>884</u>	<u>3290</u>	<u>3318</u>	

כִּי־	שָׁם	וַיֵּלֶךְ	בַּמָּקוֹם	וַיִּפְנֶעַ	11
because	there	and tarried all night,	upon a certain place,	And he lighted	
<u>3588</u>	<u>8033</u>	<u>3885</u>	<u>4725</u>	<u>6293</u>	

וַיִּשֶׂם	הַמָּקוֹם	מֵאֲבָנֵי	וַיִּקַּח	הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ	בָּא
and put	that place,	of the stones of	and he took	the sun	was set;
<u>7760</u>	<u>4725</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>3947</u>	<u>8121</u>	<u>935</u>

הָהוּא:	בַּמָּקוֹם	וַיִּשְׁכַּב	מִרְאֲשֵׁתָיו
that	in place	and lay down to sleep.	his pillows,
<u>1931</u>	<u>4725</u>	<u>7901</u>	<u>4763</u>

As we move into this portion, I want to remind us of what caused Yacov to go to Haran. We find it in the previous portion, Toldot.

Gen 27:41-45

41 So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him; and Esau said to himself, "The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob." 42 Now when the words of her elder son Esau were reported to Rebekah, she sent and called her younger son Jacob, and said to him, "Behold your brother Esau is consoling himself concerning you, by planning to kill you. 43 Now therefore, my son, obey

*my voice, and arise, flee to Haran, to my brother Laban! 44
"And stay with him a few days, until your brother's fury
subsides, 45 until your brother's anger against you subsides,
and he forgets what you did to him. Then I shall send and get
you from there. Why should I be bereaved of you both in one
day?"*

Why was Esav's fury kindled against Yacov? Because his father Yitzhak's plan to thwart the will of G-d that Yacov have the blessing had been itself thwarted by action taken by his mother and Yacov.

Was it righteous anger? No. The blessing was given to Yacov before birth. Then Esav sold the blessing to Yacov.

So, you can see that when an evil plan (which goes against G-d's will for your life) is frustrated for your benefit, the forces of evil will rage against you and plot harm for you. As the days grow dark in this world, then know that these types of events will become more common for each of us.

Yitzhak blessed Yacov, and knew that the line would continue through him. That is why he sent Yacov to get a wife from among his own

people, and not from among the “daughters of Heth” who were an irritant to Rivkah.

Gen 27:46

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am tired of living because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife from the daughters of Heth, like these, from the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"

But Esav had “spies” in or near Yitzhak’s camp, who told him what was happening, and why.

Gen 28:6-9

6 Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram, to take to himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed him he charged him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan," 7 and that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Paddan-aram. 8 So Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan displeased his father Isaac; 9 and Esau went to Ishmael, and married, besides the wives that he had,

Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth.

So, you see that Esav, rather than turn toward G-d so as to benefit from the legacy of Yitzhak, turned away from G-d in defiance and rebellion. Esav was consumed with anger. And when you are angry, you are more likely to make some very bad decisions. This defiant rebellion against his family was a very bad decision, and it has affected his lineage from that day forward.

We know from the passage that Esav was still in rage, and presented a real danger to Yacov. But Esav didn't dare attack Yacov in his father's camp. So, when Yacov was sent to Paddan-aram, Esav had an opportunity.

Our sages believe that Yacov believed that Esav would soon know of his journey, and would pursue him with murderous intent. This is why they believe that Yacov was traveling in haste, and didn't stop until it was already after sunset.

Gen 28:10-17

10 Then Jacob departed from Beersheba and went toward Haran. 11 And he came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place. 12 And he had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. 13 And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants. 14 Your descendants shall also be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it." 17 And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

In my message on this same parasha delivered November 9, 2013, I explained that what is translated as “the ladder” in this passage might be better understood as a a strong tower, a fortress, a rock, reaching to heaven itself. And angels were flowing upward and flowing downward “in Him”, this conduit, this connection between heaven and earth.

This lines-up with John 14:6-7, where Yeshua tells us that all come unto the Father through Him.

John 14:6-7

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.

The English translation says that he came to a “certain place”?

שם	וַיֵּלֶן	בְּמָקוֹם	וַיִּכְבֹּעַ	11
Pd	vqw3ms Pc	ncmsa Pa Pp	vqw3ms Pc	
there	and tarried all night,	upon a certain place,	And he lighted	
<u>8033</u>	<u>3885</u>	<u>4725</u>	<u>6293</u>	
shaam	wayaalen	bamaaqowm	Wayipga‘	

The Hebrew there is *v’yipga bmakom*. It can mean to simply “accidentally show up at a place”. And many choose that interpretation. But the root *poga* also can also mean “pray intensely”.

Yacov's prayers were answered, in a vision crafted just for him, so that he would know that the supernatural favor that had been granted to his grandfather Abraham, and to his father Yitzhak, would be likewise granted to him.

When Yacov awoke, he identified this place as the "gate of heaven".

Would Yacov have been given this promise, would he have even encountered G-d, if he had not stopped in that special place to pray? I think it was all a planned meeting between he and G-d. G-d planned it, and Yacov showed up at that place, dead tired, pursued by a murderer, and completely out of options.

Rather than focus on the place where it all happened, I want to focus on what happened at that place. Because the "what" can be far more important than the "where" in this passage.

Do you care about prayer? G-d does.

Are there troubles in your life? Are you under attack from evil ones? Do you feel that you are at the end of yourself? If so, good. For it is at the end of yourself that many of us *finally* resort to G-d.

We are at war, my holy brothers and sisters. And we need to have a battle plan. And that battle plan can only be realized through prayer.

Maybe you have seen the 2015 movie *War Room*. In it a young realtor by the name of Elizabeth Jordan (Priscilla Shirer), is going through the greatest spiritual struggle of her life, as her marriage unravels before her eyes. She is a believer, but she is at her wit's end. She's doing her job of trying to sell houses, but her spirit really isn't in it.

Ms. Clara (Karen Abercrombie), an older widow (who as a young wife also faced the same struggle), enlists Elizabeth to sell her home.

It's during the initial tour of Ms. Clara's home that Elizabeth first is introduced to the "war room".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DV4FxJErRKg>

Let's adopt the strategy of Ms. Clara. Let's all get in our individual "war room".

In that war room, we just might see the same "strong tower" and redeemer who Yacov encountered in his special place.

In your war room, take refuge in “the Rock” which is the gateway to heaven, upon Whom the angels ascend and descend.

In that war room, you just might find victory just as King David did, after apparently having a very similar vision.

2 Sam 22:1-4

22 And David spoke the words of this song to the Lord in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. 2 And he said,

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; 3 My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation [Yeshua], my stronghold and my refuge; My savior, Thou dost save me from violence. 4 "I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; And I am saved from my enemies.

Our enemy is the source of all violence. He hates you. He hates your congregation. He hates your marriage. He hates your work for our King. He most certainly hates me for encouraging and teaching you.

Satan hates you with a hatred that is greater than that of Esav of Yacov. He pursues you to overtake and murder you, if he can. He wants to make you angry as well, so you will make some very bad decisions, and leave G-d's promised family.

How can we win this battle? Here's what the Scriptures say. It's not our job to do the heavy lifting. That is something that only G-d can do. It is our job to seek Him, to trust Him, and to stand on His Word.

Don't tell me that you don't have time to pray every day, when you take time to fight losing battles by doing things that provide no advantage in this battle (at best), or things that can divide and destroy (at worst).

Make an appointment with G-d, and keep it. Give G-d one hour a week. Learn to fight the right way, with the right weapons.

Please forgive me for being direct. But inside each of you is a warrior, and that warrior needs to be awakened. We are in a battle for the future of our congregation.

I think right now Satan is winning the war we are fighting here. I see bloody bodies everywhere. I have no intention of allowing him to win even one more battle.

As spiritual warriors, we must do two things right now. The first is that we must not desert the battlefield. The second is that we must not shoot one another.

I have shortened this message so that we can spend some time now together as a congregation, in prayer.

Now, I invite you to join me as we fall on our face before our G-d. This shul can be our joint “war room” for now. Let’s go to that strong tower which our father Yacov saw, and King David knew, who is our Redeemer, for help, guidance, strength, wisdom, and in the end...victory.

How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpfkFyG5qQ>

Verses for VaYetse

Gen 28:10-11

Gen 27:41-46

Gen 28:6-17

John 14:6-7

2 Sam 22:1-4