VAYISHLACH (and he sent)

Jacob Wrestling with the Angel (1865 painting by Alexander Louis Leloir)

Question: What did Laban do after he made a peace agreement with Jacob? Laban send messengers to Esau saying, “Have you heard what Jacob your brother has done to me, who first came to me naked and bare, and I went to meet him, and brought him to my house with honor, and I made him great, and I gave him my two daughters for wives and also two of my maids. And יהוה blessed him on my account, and he increased abundantly. When he saw that his wealth increased, he left me while I went to shear my sheep, and he rose up and fled in secrecy. And he did not allow me to kiss my daughters and their children, and he led my daughters as captives taken by the sword, and he also stole my gods and he fled.” And Esau heard all the words of Laban's messengers, and his anger was greatly kindled against Jacob, and he remembered his hatred, and his anger burned within him. Esau took four hundred men with drawn swords, and he went to Jacob to kill him. When Rebekah heard of this she sent seventy-two men from the servants of Isaac to meet Jacob on the road; and she said, “Listen to my voice and when Esau comes to you, plead with him, and do not speak harshly to him, and give him a present from what you possess.” And when Jacob heard the words of his mother, which the messengers had spoken to him, Jacob lifted up his voice and wept bitterly, and did as his mother commanded him. (Jasher)

Question: How many years had it been since Jacob had seen Esau? 34 years

Genesis 32:4 And he commanded אתם *them* saying, *This is what you will say* to my master Esau; Your servant Jacob said this, I have lived with Laban and stayed there until now: 5 And I have oxen and donkeys, flocks and menservants and female servants: and I have sent to tell my master, that I may find grace in your sight. 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob saying, We came to your brother Esau and *he* comes to meet you *with* four hundred men. 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided ־את the people that *was* אתו *with him*־את וְ *and* the flocks ־את וְ *and* herds and the camels into two camps. C-MATS

Question: Why was the righteous Jacob afraid? Didn't he trust in יהוה? Jacob may have been concerned that he had sinned when he sealed the covenant with Laban or by not honoring his parents for 20 years. Jacob knew that he had personally injured Esau and יהוה may have pity on Esau. He may have been distressed that he may have to kill someone to defend his family. He was distressed by the very fact that he was afraid, for such fear indicated a lack of trust in יהוה's promise. *Chumash*

Genesis 32:8 And *Jacob* said, If Esau comes to הָאַחַת *the one* company and destroys it, then the other company, which is left, will escape. C-MATS

Question: How did Jacob prepare to meet Esau?

1. He readied himself and his camp for a battle unto the death.
2. He threw himself upon יהוה's mercy through prayer.
3. He sent a lavish gift to appease Esau's anger. *Chumash*

Genesis 32:9 And Jacob said, O Elohim of my father Abraham and Elohim of my father Isaac, יהוה which said to me, Return to your country and to your kinsmen and I will deal well with you: 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all הָאֱמֶת *the* faithfulness, which you have shown to ־את your servant; because with my staff I passed over ־את the Jordan; and now I have become two *companies*. C-MATS

Jacob praying

Question: Why did Jacob think that he was not worthy of יהוה's mercy? Righteous people can be judged and punished for not having achieved their full potential. Maybe Jacob felt that he was lacking in some way. This is a challenge for everyone to strive to live up to his full potential. *Chumash*

Discuss: Are you living up to your full potential? Is יהוה grieved when you waste your time, money, and talents? How can you change how you govern your time, money, and talents?

Genesis 32:11 Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, Esau: because I am afraid of אתו *him*, otherwise he will come and attack me and the mothers with the children. 12 וְאתה *And you,* אמַרְת *you said,* I will certainly do you good and make את־ your seed as the sand of the sea, which are so many that they cannot be numbered. C-MATS

Question: What did יהוה do to answer Jacob's prayer for protection from Esau? יהוה sent three angels of heaven, and they went before Esau and came to him. And these angels appeared to Esau and his people as two thousand men, riding upon horses furnished with all sorts of war instruments, and they appeared in the sight of Esau and all his men to be divided into four camps, each with a chief. They ran toward Esau and his people and terrified them, and Esau fell off the horse in alarm, and all his men separated from Esau for they were greatly afraid. And the whole camp (from יהוה) shouted after them when they fled from Esau, and all the warlike men answered, saying, "Surely we are the servants of Jacob, who is the servant of יהוה, and who can stand against us?" And Esau answered them saying, "Your lord is my brother." And they answered him, "Only on account of Jacob, your brother, we will do nothing to you." And when Esau saw the evil, which the four angels had done to him and to his men, he became greatly afraid of his brother Jacob, and he went to meet him in peace. And Esau concealed his hatred against Jacob, because he was afraid for his life on account of his brother Jacob, and because he imagined that the four camps that he had come upon were Jacob's servants. (Jasher)

Genesis 32:13 And he lodged there that same night; and prepared a present from *what had been given to him* for Esau his brother. C-MATS

Question: How did Jacob select his gift to Esau? Jacob selected his gift from the livestock that he had accumulated during his years of unremitting labor. The most effective gift is one that someone has earned through his own toil and labor (Alshich). *Chumash*

Genesis 32:14 Two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, 15 Thirty milk camels with their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty she donkeys and ten foals. C-MATS

Question: Why does Jacob send many females and few males to Esau? As a skilled shepherd who was fully familiar with animals' breeding habits (Ibn Ezra), Jacob sent sufficient males for the needs of the females (Rashi). *Chumash*

Genesis 32:16 And he delivered *them* into the hand of his servants, every *herd* by themselves; and said to his servants, Pass over before me and put a space between the herds. 17 And he commanded ־את the first *servant* saying, When Esau my brother meets you and asks you saying, Whose *servant are* התא *you* and where *are you from* and whose are these before you? 18 וְאָמַרְתָּ *And you say* they be your servant Jacob's; it *is* a present sent to my master Esau: and he *is* behind us. 19 And commanded he also ־את the second *servant* and ־את the third *servant* and ־את all that followed the herds saying, In this manner you will speak to Esau when you see אתו *him*. 20 And you *will* say also, Your servant Jacob *is* behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goes before me and when I will see his face, *maybe* he will accept me. 21 So he sent the present before him: and he *stayed* that night in the *camp*. 22 And he rose up that night and took ־את two *of* his wives ־ואת וְ *and* two *of* his women servants ־ואת וְ *and* eleven *of* his sons and passed over את *the* ford Jabbok (*pour forth*). 23 And he took them and sent them over ־את the brook and sent over ־את that he had. 24 And Jacob was left alone; and there a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. C-MATS

Question: Why was Jacob left alone? Jacob went back to gather any forgotten items left at the camp. To the righteous every penny is earned diligently and honestly and every item bought with the money is deemed precious. Money should not be wasted and possessions should be cared for diligently.

Question: If a person can afford it, is there anything wrong with wasting, or not taking proper care of, his or her things? When we use our property carefully and wisely, we are developing a sense of gratitude for what we have as well as a more responsible attitude to life. Both of these traits will make us happier and more successful.

Question: Is there ever a time we should be willing to be less than ideally careful with our possessions? Lending our things to others, or using our possessions to help people is an important value - even if it might cause our things to have more wear and tear.

Question: Everything we have - including all of the world's resources like water and oil - are gifts from יהוה that we should appreciate and not waste, even if we have more than we need. Does the value of not wasting the world's resources mean that we should try to avoid using any of them as much as possible? There is nothing wrong with using the world's resources to live normal and happy lives. יהוה, in fact, wants us to partake of and enjoy the world that He made, and when we use the world's resources with moderation and good intentions, we are actually 'helping' the things we use in a spiritual way. However, while it's fine to use what we need, we should be careful not to use more than we need. Wasting, either purposefully or through carelessness, isn't using יהוה's gift of the world, but abusing it.

Question: How does the way we relate to our property reflect upon the way we relate to יהוה? If someone receives a gift from someone else, and if he takes good care of it, it is a sign of respect and appreciation for the giver. If he carelessly wastes or ruins it, it is a sign of disrespect. (Sort of like choosing to frame the needlepoint tapestry Aunt Millie made for you and put it on the wall above your bed versus using it to line the birdcage.) When we realize that everything we have and every resource of the world is actually a gift from יהוה, it becomes clear that the way we use them demonstrates our respect and appreciation for Him or the opposite.

Spiritual exercise*:* Are you wasting water, electricity, gas, or food? Are you recycling to save materials that can be used again for others? Try to find one way to not waste resources today.

Jacob Wrestling with the Angel (1855 illustration by Gustave Doré)

Genesis 32:25 And when the *Man* saw that he did not defeat Him, He touched the socket of Jacob's *hip* and *put it* out of joint as He wrestled with him. C-MATS

Jacob and the Angel

Genesis 32:26 And He said, Let me go because its daybreak. And he said, I will not let you go *unless* you bless me. 27 And He said to him, "What *is* your name?" And he said, Jacob. 28 And He said, Your name will *no longer* be called Jacob, but Israel: *because you have showed your strength* with Elohim and with men and have prevailed. 29 And Jacob asked him and said, Tell *me,* please, your name And He said, "Why *is* it *that* you ask My name?" And He blessed אתו *him* there. C-MATS

Question: Who is the Man that Jacob wrestled with? The man was an angelic being sent to test Jacob. This angel would not allow Jacob to pass, so Jacob had to fight the angel. Jacob called on יהוה's Name and prevailed over the angel. The angel saw that Jacob no longer should bear the name of Jacob (of the heel of), because Jacob did deserve the blessing of Esau. Now Jacob will be called Israel (overcomer). The angel blessed Jacob because he was commanded to do so by יהוה. *Chumash*

Question: Why didn't the angel tell Jacob his name? Knowledge of his name would be no use to Jacob. The angel only served יהוה and would not come to Jacob if he summoned him. An angel exists only to perform יהוה's will, and his "name" is a reflection of that mission. In asking the angel his name, Jacob sought to learn the nature of his mission, but the angel replied that he had no set name, for the names of angels change according to their assignments (Rashi). But the angel blessed him, for he had been commanded to do so, not because he had independent power (Ramban; Tur). *Chumash*

Question: Why do you think that prayer was an important part of Jacob's strategy to deal with his aggressive brother? People tend to underestimate the power of prayer. It is much more than expressing a hope or wishful feeling. Praying to יהוה accesses a powerful spiritual force that can improve our lives and accomplish things that would be otherwise impossible. From the verse "The voice is the voice of Jacob and the hands are the hands of Esau" is an ancient teaching that while the 'Esau's of the world rely on their physical strength and cunning, we, the spiritual descendants of Jacob, have as our main weapon our voice -- prayer. Jacob knew the value of this weapon and it served them well.

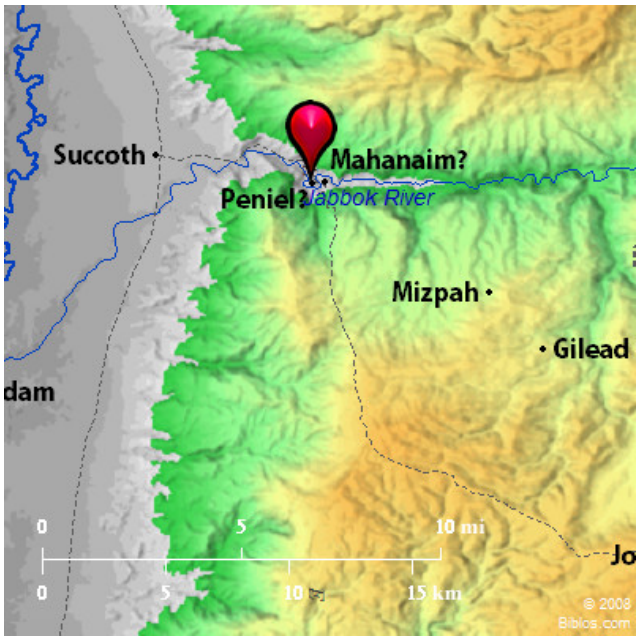
Spiritual Exercise: Can you think of a time that you saw your prayers answered? Are you praying and asking יהוה to help you with all your life challenges?

Question: Life has many challenges to overcome. How do challenges help a person grow? Just like the strain of exercise builds a person's body, the strain of life-challenges are like exercise to the character and soul. Though it's not always pleasant, when we look back in life we will see that it was the struggles of life that made us better people.

Question: Do you think someone can grow so much that he becomes like a new person? Although we always keep certain parts of ourselves and our personalities, a human being has almost an infinite ability to grow and this is one of the most amazing and enjoyable parts of life.

Eugene Delacroix: Jacob Wrestling with the Angel, c. 1861 (Saint-Sulpice, Paris)

Genesis 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel (*face of El*): saying, רָאִיתִי *I saw* Elohim face to face and my life *is* preserved. C-MATS



Question: Where is Peniel? **Penuel** (Hebrew פְּנוּאֵל), also known as the "face of Elohim", is a place not far from Succoth, on the east of the Jordan and north of the river Jabbok. It is also called "**Peniel**" meaning "I have seen a divine being face to face, yet my life is preserved."

Question: Do you think יהוה is aware and concerned about the minute details of people's lives, or just the 'big events'? It might at first seem that just as the 'big events' tend to interest us more, so, too, it is with יהוה. However, יהוה is infinite, and everywhere and cares so much about each of us that our every positive action, word or thought is a 'big event' to Him and gives Him tremendous pleasure. יהוה should be as apparent and immediate in your life and affect your actions as strongly as people that you could see right in front of you with your eyes.

Spiritual Exercise: Ask yourself these questions before you speak or do anything: Do I want יהוה to hear me say this? Do I want יהוה to see me do this?

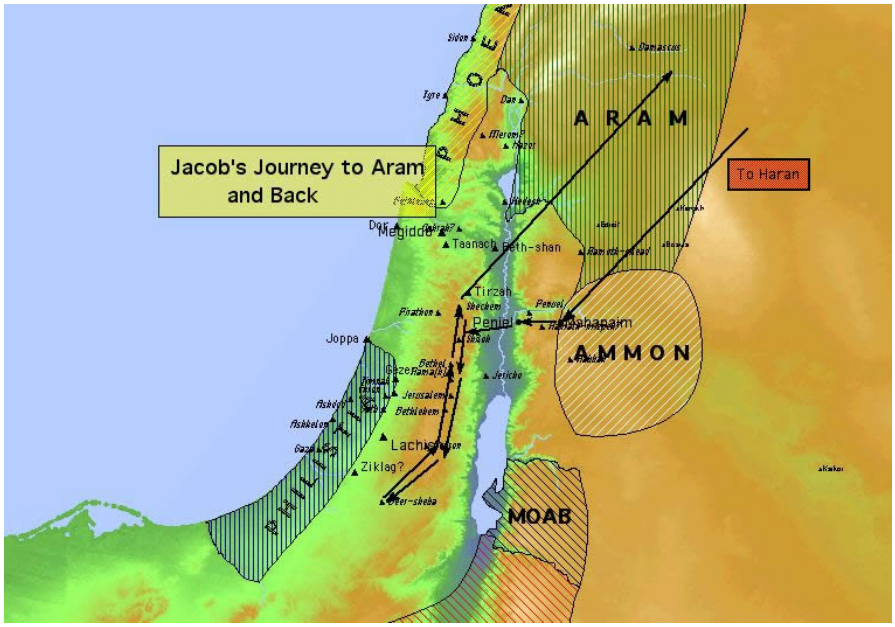
Genesis 32:31 And as he passed over את Penuel the sun rose upon him and he went limping at the *hip*. C-MATS

Question: Why did the angel cause Jacob to limp? Giving the limp to Jacob was Jacob's blessing. Jacob appeared weak to Esau and humbled and Esau received his brother. *Chumash*

Question: If everything that happens is directed by יהוה for our benefit, does that mean that nothing is bad? From a human perspective there are definitely things which seem to be good and others which appear to be bad. יהוה has planted those perceptions within us, and definitely wants us to pursue that which is 'good', and distance ourselves from that which is 'bad.' The Torah, and its many guidelines, is in fact an instruction manual of how to do just that. However, in a deeper sense, part of us has to always remember that 'bad' is in essence only a disguised type of 'good', and that whatever happens, to trust in יהוה, and believe that someday the good hidden within it will be revealed. We should do what we can to make things work out the way we would like them to, but if they don't, we should know that it isn't just a 'bad break,' but rather it is יהוה's way of giving us something good that we didn't even realize we needed.

Question: How can a person develop his powers of seeing יהוה's guiding hand in our lives, and accepting things when they don't go the way he hoped they would, despite our best efforts? One powerful and life-enhancing tool is to keep a journal listing one event each day where we are able to see a purposeful and beneficial 'coincidence' that has happened to us. The truth is they are not merely coincidences, but יהוה's way of speaking with and letting us know He's here. At first they may be difficult to spot, but if you persist you will begin to see them more and more, and be amazed at how your life is being planned and guided every step of the way.

Genesis 32:32 Therefore, *they* do not eat, *the* Children of Israel את the sinew (*thigh muscle along the hip socket*) that shrank which *is* upon the hollow of the thigh to this day: because He touched the socket of Jacob's thigh (*hip*) in the sinew that shrank. C-MATS



Genesis 33:1 And Jacob lifted up his eyes and looked and saw Esau coming with four hundred men. And he divided ־את *the* children of Leah and of Rachel and of the two maidservants *into companies*. 2 And he put ־את the maidservants ־אתו *and* their children first ־אתו *and* Leah and her children after *them* ־אתו *and* Rachel ־אתו *and* Joseph. 3 And he *went* before them and bowed himself to the ground seven times until he came near to his brother. C-MATS

Question: What is a tool that costs us nothing to use, yet can improve our relationships with others, get people to like us, and make even people who might otherwise be our enemies want to be our friends? That tool is sincere praise. Jacob faced a sticky encounter with his brother Esau. Esau was very angry with Jacob, and had even threatened his life. But Jacob complimented and praised his brother when they met, and they parted with a big hug, and at least for the time being, at peace. By making the effort to sincerely praise and compliment the people in our lives we can make bad relationships good and good ones better.

Question: Is there difference between praise and flattery? While on the surface they may seem similar, actually there is a world of difference. Praise comes from the heart, whereas flattery comes from the lips. Praise is sincere, while flattery is phony. Praise leaves a person with a lasting good feeling inside, flattery wears off quickly and leaves a person feeling used.

Question: Is it okay to praise something wrong or unethical that someone does in order to get on his good side? It may be tempting, but it's wrong. A person behaving improperly is hurting himself or others, and this shouldn't be reinforced. However, just about everyone has some genuine good within him, and it is worthwhile to try to discover that good point and praise others about it, it can often work wonders.

Spiritual Exercise: What would be one of the biggest compliments a person could give you? Give a compliment to encourage someone today.

Genesis 33:4 And Esau ran לִקְרָאתוֹ *to meet him* and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him: and they wept. C-MATS

Question: Was Esau really happy to see Jacob? In the Torah Scroll, there are dots over each letter of this word, an interpretive device that calls attention to hidden allusions. Many disagree regarding the significance of the dots in this verse. Some hold that Esau's kisses were insincere, "because he did not come to kiss him, but to bite him,"; but some say that, although it is an undeniable rule that Esau hates Jacob, at that moment his mercy was aroused and he kissed Jacob with all his heart (Rashi). One cannot cry unless he is genuinely moved, for tears flow from the innermost feelings. Esau's kiss accompanied by tears proved that he was more than a selfish, violent hunter; he, too, was a descendant of Abraham, who was capable of setting aside his sword in favor of human feelings. *Chumash*

The Reunion of Jacob and Esau (1844 painting by Francesco Hayez)

Question: Jacob went to great lengths in order to avoid fighting with his brother, Esau. Jacob wasn't afraid, and he would have fought if he didn't have a choice, but he knew -- and his actions teach us -- that the Torah way is to avoid violence whenever we can. Is it ever okay to use violence? When a person feels genuinely threatened and with no other option or way to escape, he may have to resort to violence to defend himself, but it is almost always preferable and possible to find another way and we should try our best to do so.

Question: Does might make right? If not, what *does* make right?' What's right or just is not determined by strength or numbers. יהוה has implanted a sense of truth and fairness in each of our hearts and wants us to live justly. Through the Torah, He has given us guidelines of how to access and implement this inner wisdom to improve our lives and the world.

Question: A secret to turn enemies into friends is to love them. What do you think might lie behind this secret? The human heart is like a mirror that reflects whatever emotions are being projected at it. When we make a sincere concerted effort to love and have positive feelings toward someone—it is nearly impossible not to influence them to feel more positively toward us. People who have developed this technique to a high degree have used it to literally save their lives.

Spiritual Exercise: Make a concerted effort to love someone that you have trouble getting along with this week. Watch your enemy turn into your friend.

Jacob Reconciled With Esau

Genesis 33:5 And *Esau* lifted up אֵת his eyes and saw אֵת the women וְאֵת *and* the children; and said, Who *are* these *with* you? And he said, The children which has graciously given Elohim אֵת your servant. 6 Then the maidservants came near, they and their children and they bowed themselves. 7 And Leah with her children came near and bowed themselves: and after *them* came Joseph and Rachel and they bowed themselves. C-MATS

Question: Why did Joseph come first before Rachel in this verse? In the other groups, the mothers went ahead of their sons, but Joseph stood in front of Rachel to shield her from Esau's covetous gaze, since she was very beautiful (Rashi). *Chumash*

Genesis 33:8 And he said, What *do* you *mean by* this *procession of* droves which I met? And he said, *These are* to find *favor* in the sight of my master. 9 And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself. 10 And Jacob said, No, please, if now מָצָאתִי *I found* grace in your sight, then receive my present: because I have seen your face, as though רָאִיתִי *I see* the face of Elohim and you were pleased with me. 11 Take, please, אֵת my blessing that *I* brought to you, because Elohim has dealt graciously with me and because I have enough. And he urged him and he took *it*. C-MATS

Question: Why did Jacob say that he had enough? The righteous are content no matter how much or how little they have. They feel that whatever they have is everything that they could possible need. <u>They believe that יהוה gives you exactly what you need.</u> But wicked people like Esau speak boastfully: "**I have enough**," emphasizing the abundance of their possessions and proclaiming that they have accumulated more than they could ever want (Rashi). *Chumash*

Question: Would you like to be rich? Who wouldn't? The Torah tells us a surefire formula to how to strike it rich - and it has nothing to do with money. <u>The secret is to learn how to feel satisfied with whatever we have</u>. Our patriarch, Jacob, knew this secret. Jacob told his brother, Esau, that he had "everything." What he's saying is that he is so perfectly content with whatever יהוה gives him, that he really feels like he has everything he could possibly need. Jacob's precious sense of contentment is what made him "rich," and it can do the same for us.

Question: Who do you think will live a happier life: someone who is content with what he has, or someone who is always trying to get more? On the surface, it might look like the more someone gets - the better off he is. <u>But happiness has nothing to do with having more or less. Happiness comes when we feel like we have what we need.</u> Therefore someone who can reach that attitude about what he already has comes out the winner and will even have more energy to strive to attain more.

Question: Can a person train himself to be content with what he has? It takes practice, but it can be done. <u>It helps a lot to keep reminding ourselves that, 'At this very moment, יהוה is right with me, and giving me exactly what I need to become the best person possible.'</u> It may take some work, but it's worth it. The reward is an incredibly happy life!

Question: Perhaps we can understand how an attitude of being satisfied with what we have can make someone feel content, but what does that have to do with being rich? Wealth is a relative term. A multi-millionaire may feel like he has it made - until he bumps yachts with a billionaire. The pursuit of wealth is essentially a quest for the feeling of 'having enough.' We can get trapped into thinking, 'once I just get that, it will be enough' - but it never is. The only way to really feel, and to be, rich, is to learn to be content with what we have, right now.

Question: Would you say that only someone who is wealthy could honestly say that "יהוה has given me everything that I need"? No. In fact the feeling of having "everything we need" has very little to do with our possessions. It is an attitude that we can learn to develop by remembering that יהוה is constantly with us and is always making sure that we are being given what we truly need to grow into better people. This is the goal of life. Someone who can see things this way will always be happy.

Spiritual Exercise: What are three things you're really grateful for? Who gave them to you? יהוה gave you all that you have. Think of all the things you are grateful for today and thank יהוה for them.

Spiritual Exercise: What things do you really want to buy soon? Will they really make you happy? Are they what יהוה wants you to buy? Do they entertain you or feed you spiritually?

Genesis 33:12 And *Esau* said, Let's *get ready* and go and I will go before you. 13 And he said to him, My master knows that the children *are* tender and the flocks and herds that *are* with me *are* with young: and if men overdrive them one day, then all the flocks will die. 14 Let my master, please, *go* before his servant: and I will *travel slowly,* so that the cattle and children that *go* before me will be able to endure until I come to my master at Seir (*rough*). 15 And Esau said, Let me leave with you some of the *men* that are אתי *with me.* And *Jacob* said, *There is no need for you to be so kind to me,* my master.16 So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. C-MATS

Question: Jacob spoke of the flocks dying if pressed too hard, but not his sons dying. Why? Jacob did not speak of possible death, because "a covenant is made with the lips". Even an unintentional implication, much less an explicit statement, may allude to future unpleased events. Such unintended predictions often become fulfilled as if they were prophecy. יהוה fulfills the words of our mouth. *Chumash*

Question: How old were Jacob's children? Reuben the oldest was no more than 12 years old.

Question: Why didn't Jacob go to Seir like he told Esau that he would go? Maybe Jacob never intended to go to Seir, but he did not want to offend Esau. Jacob did not trust Esau and also did not want to be linked to the bad reputation of Esau. *Chumash*

Genesis 33:17 And Jacob journeyed to Succoth (*booth or tent*) and built him a house and made booths for his cattle: therefore, the name of the place *is* called Succoth. C-MATS

Question: Why was the place called Succoth? Maybe this was the first time anyone had built shelters for his animals to protect them from the wind and cold, and it was remembered for Jacob's act of kindness for his animals. *Chumash*

Genesis 33:18 And Jacob came to Shalem (*perfect peace/quiet*), a city of Shechem (*ridge*), which *is* in the land of Canaan (*land of Cain*), when he came from Padan-aram (*plateau of Aram*) and pitched his tent את near the city. C-MATS

Jacob traveled from Succoth to Shechem

Shechem — in the valley between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal.

Question: How did Jacob arrive in Shechem? Jacob arrived intact physically -- having recovered from the injury inflicted by the angel; intact financially -- lacking nothing, though he had showered a lavish gift upon Esau for יהוה had replenished everything he spent on that gift; and intact in his learning -- having forgotten nothing while in Laban's house (Rashi from Shabbos 33b). *Chumash*

Genesis 33:19 And he bought את־ a parcel of a field where he had spread his tent *from* the children of Hamor (*donkey*), Shechem's father, for 100 pieces of money. C-MATS

Question: Why did Jacob buy land in Shechem? He no longer wanted to be a transient, but a resident of the land that יהוה had promised to his offspring. He knew that Esau would not harm him there, either because Isaac was nearby or the inhabitants would protect Jacob because of their respect for Isaac. This is the future site of Joseph's sepulcher-one of three places noted in scripture that was bought with money. (The other two are Cave of Machpelah bought by Abraham, and the site of the Temple bought by David.) *Chumash*

Genesis 33:20 And he erected there an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel (*mighty Elohim of Israel*). C-MATS

Question: Why was this sacrifice important? This fulfilled a vow that Jacob had made to יהוה 22 years earlier before leaving the Land to go to Laban that He would serve יהוה if יהוה protected him and brought him back to the Land safety. *Chumash*

Tomb of Jacob

In 1996, Shechem was given over to the Palestinian Authority. In 2000 a mob broke into the compound and destroyed everything. Jews weren't allowed to visit the site again until 2003. In 2015, Palestinian rioters set fire to the holy site itself, preventing Jewish or Christian visitors from visiting until the site could be restored. Now there are a few visits a year for Jews which take place in the middle of the night under protection by the IDF.

Dinah daughter of Jacob

Genesis 34:1 And Dinah, the daughter of Leah, which she had borne *to* Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. C-MATS

Question: Why did Dinah go to see the daughters of the land? Some of the women that live in the land went to the city of Shechem to dance and rejoice with the daughters of the people in the city of Shechem. Rachel and Leah along with their families and Dinah also went to see the rejoicing of the daughters of the city. Shechem saw Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, sitting with her mother before the daughters of the city, and the damsel pleased him greatly, and he asked his friends and his people, saying, “Who is this damsel?” (Jasher)

Question: Do you think Dinah sinned by wanting to see the girls in the city of Shechem celebrating? It's only natural to be curious and want to explore things that seem interesting and outside of our regular routine. However, we should first use our judgment and be sure that what we're getting into isn't potentially dangerous or destructive.

Question: Boredom may lead to sin. What positive things do you think someone who feels bored could do to make life more interesting? One thing is to try to set meaningful goals in life and do as much as we can to fulfill them. Another thing is to try to look at even familiar things and activities more closely and we'll be surprised to see how interesting they actually are.

Question: In your opinion what is the difference between healthy and unhealthy curiosity? Healthy curiosity is when we seek knowledge that will somehow bring us practical benefit or growth. Curiosity which stems from feeling bored or wanting to know other people's secrets is most likely unhealthy.

Question: Why do you think people seem to always want to have or experience something new and different? There is a natural uplift or thrill that comes with novelty. However, many times that feeling of wanting something new or more is because we are really longing for something with spiritual meaning and once we find that, we will see that we are much more content with what we already have.

Genesis 34:2 And when Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw אתה *her*, he took אתה *her* and lay אתה *with her* and defiled her. C-MATS

Dinah (watercolor circa 1896–1902 by James Tissot)

Genesis 34:3 And *he was strongly attracted* to Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and he loved את the young woman and spoke kindly to *her*. 4 And Shechem spoke to his father Hamor saying, Get me את הַזֹּאת *this* את the young woman to marry. 5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled את Dinah his daughter: his sons were *with* את his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they *came home*. C-MATS

Question: Who was defiled by Shechem? The first time we see an את in front of Dinah's name is when the text speaks of her being defiled by Shechem in Genesis 34:5 and 13, so it is actually both Dinah and the את that are defiled, such is the strength of covenant. C-MATS

Question: What did Jacob do when he found out that Dinah was in Shechem's house? Jacob sent twelve of his servants to fetch Dinah from the house of Shechem. When they came Shechem went out to them with his men and drove them from his house, and he would not allow them to come get Dinah. Shechem was sitting with Dinah kissing and embracing her before the eyes of Jacob's servants. The servants of Jacob came back and told him, "When we came, he and his men drove us away, and we saw Shechem caressing Dinah before our eyes. " Jacob sent two maidens from his servants' daughters to take care of Dinah in the house of Shechem. (Jasher)

Genesis 34:6 And Hamor, the father of Shechem, went out to Jacob to *speak* אתו *with him*. 7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard *about it*: and the men were grieved and they were very angry, because *Shechem* had performed wickedness in Israel by laying *with* את *the* daughter *of* Jacob; which should not be done. C-MATS

Question: What did Jacob's sons say when they found out what happened to Dinah? They sat before their father and they spoke to him kindled with wrath, saying, "Surely death is due to this man and to his household, because יהוה commanded Noah and his children that man shall never rob, nor commit adultery; now Shechem has both ravaged and committed fornication with our sister, and not one of all the people of the city spoke a word to him. " (Jasher)

Question: Why didn't anyone come to Dinah's aid? Because of Shechem's royal status as prince, no one came to Dinah's aid despite her screams.

Genesis 34:8 And Hamor *spoke* אתם *with them* saying, My son Shechem longs for your daughter: Please give אתה *her to* him as a wife. C-MATS

Question: What did Hamor and Shechem offer Jacob and his sons? Hamor and Shechem took turns offering Jacob and his sons extravagant proposals to gain their consent to a face-saving wedding and a permanent friendship between the families. The Canaanite nations were notorious for their immorality making a friendship between them inconceivable.

Genesis 34:9 And make marriages אתנו *with us and* give your daughters to us ואת *and* our daughters take with you. 10 ואתנו *And with us* you will live: and the land will be *available to* you; live and trade here and *acquire* possessions here. 11 And Shechem said to her father and to her brothers, Let me find *favor* in your eyes and whatever you will say to me אתן *I will give* you. 12 Ask me *whatever* dowry and gift *you want* and I will give you *what you* say to me: but give me את the young woman as a wife. 13 And answered the sons of Jacob את Shechem ואת *and* Hamor his father deceitfully, because he had defiled את Dinah their sister: 14 And they said to them, We cannot do this thing to give את our sister to one that *is* uncircumcised; because that *would be* a *disgrace to* us: 15 Yea, בְּזֹאת *in this* we will consent, if you will be as we *are* and circumcise *every male among you*. C-MATS

Question: Since Jacob was present at this meeting, he must have understood what his sons intended and approved, but he did not speak up against them. If so, why was he so angry when they acted as they did? And why did he limit his anger to Simeon and Levi, who carried out the plan? (**And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, You have troubled אתי *me* and made me stink among the inhabitants of the land. Genesis 34:30)** The original intent of the brothers was that the Shechemites would release Dinah because they would never agree to be circumcised. Even if they were to agree, the brothers would be able to seize Dinah and escape while the Shechemite men were ill and weakened. Simeon and Levi acted independently by carrying out their massacre without Jacob's knowledge. They chose circumcision as the means by which to disable the Shechemites in order to inflict injury on the organ that Shechem used to assault Dinah. *Chumash*

Genesis 34:16 Then we will give את־ our daughters to you ואת־ *and* your daughters we will take with us and we will live אִתָּכֶם *with you* and we will become one people. 17 But if you will not listen to us and not be circumcised; then we will take את־ our sister and we will leave. 18 And their words pleased Hamor and Shechem Hamor's son. 19 And the young man did not delay to do this thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: *even though* he *was* more honored than all the house of his father. C-MATS

Question: When was Shechem circumcised? As prince of the city, Shechem could have circumcised himself last, but his desire for Dinah was so overpowering that he did not delay; he made himself the example and was circumcised first (Sforno). As the next verse implies, he did so even before his fellow townsmen agreed to the proposal. *Chumash*

Genesis 34:20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came to the gate of their city and *spoke* with the men of their city saying, 21 These men *are* peaceful אִתָּנוּ *with us*; therefore, let them live in the land and trade אֹתָהּ *therein*; because the land *is* large enough for them; ־אֶת their daughters we will take for wives ־וְאֶת *and* our daughters let us give them. 22 Yea, בְּזֹאת *in this* will the men consent to live אִתָּנוּ *with us* and be one people, if every male among us is circumcised, as they are circumcised. 23 Won't their cattle and *possessions* and *all their animals* be ours? Only let us consent to them and they will live אִתָּנוּ *with us*. C-MATS

Question: What was the plan of Hamor? Hamor wanted to gradually absorb the abundant possessions of Jacob's household by intermarrying with them. *Chumash*

Genesis 34:24 Everyone that went out of the city gate listened to Hamor and to Shechem his son; and every male was circumcised that went out of the city gate. C-MATS

Question: Who circumcised every male in Shechem? And on the next day, Shechem and Hamor his father rose up early in the morning, and they assembled all the men of their city into the middle of the city, and they called for the sons of Jacob, who circumcised every male belonging to them on that day and the next. 645 men and 246 children were circumcised. (Jashar)

Question: Did every man in the city listen to Shechem and his father and become circumcised? Chiddekem, son of Pered, the father of Hamor, and his six brothers, would not listen to Shechem and his father Hamor, and they would not be circumcised, for the proposal of the sons of Jacob was disgusting in their sight, and their anger was greatly roused that the people of the city had not listened to them. Chiddekem convinced the men of the city to repent from this deed that they had done, because their ancestors had not commanded them to do this. And when Hamor and his son Shechem and all the people of the city heard the words of Chiddekem and his brothers, they were terribly afraid for their lives at their words, and they repented of what they had done. The men of the city decided to wait until their flesh was healed and they would unite in battle against Jacob. Dinah heard all these words, which Chiddekem and his brothers had spoken, and she sent one of her maidens, that her father had sent to take care of her in the house of Shechem, to Jacob her father and to her brothers. When Jacob heard the words of Dinah, he was filled with wrath, and his anger was kindled against them. Simeon and Levi swore, "As יהוה lives by this time tomorrow, there shall not be a remnant left in the whole city." (Jasher)

Genesis 34:25 And it came to pass on the third day when they were sore that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took his sword and came upon the city boldly and killed all the males. 26 ־וְאֶת *and* Hamor ־וְאֶת *and* Shechem his son they killed with the edge of the sword and took ־אֶת Dinah out of Shechem's house and left. C-MATS

Question: How old was Levi at this time? He was 13 years old, which gives us the interpretation of a "man" being held accountable for his sins at 13 years old. *Chumash*

Question: Were Simeon and Levi justified in killing the men of Shechem? According to the Noachide Laws under which all men were under after the Flood, theft, which includes kidnapping, was punished by the death penalty. Simeon and Levi were carrying out this judgment. Only Simeon and Levi proved themselves as Dinah's brothers by risking their lives for her. The other nine brothers apparently refused to take part in the attack, and Jacob was sharply critical of Simeon and Levi for their actions.

MASSACRE OF THE HIVITES BY SIMEON AND LEVI.

Question: Simeon and Levi let their temper get the best of them and cause themselves unnecessary problems. We too can save ourselves a lot of grief when we learn how to temper our temper. Someone who loses his temper is like someone who worships idols. What do you think that means? Worshipping idols (instead of יהוה) essentially means forgetting that יהוה is in control of the universe and our lives. Losing our temper is similar insofar as if we remembered that whatever was happening was from יהוה and for our ultimate best, we would never 'lose it.'

Question: How can we know if a decision we are about to make is rash and impulsive or not? A sign of an impulsive decision is that we feel an inner pressure to act quickly, and not think things through. It's likely then that our feelings are trying to 'pull a fast one' on us, and get us to act in a way we'll regret. We should always try to pause, at least for a moment, to think, in between feeling something and acting upon that feeling.

Question: Is there a place for spontaneity, or should we always think out and plan what we are going to do before we do it? Thinking before acting is a spiritual discipline. For most of us 'mortals', there is a certain excitement that comes from being spontaneous. A good way to handle this dilemma is to establish clear borders in our mind of what we are and are not willing to do, and then allow ourselves to be spontaneous within the 'willing to do' category.

Question: Should a person follow his heart or his mind? Ideally we should train our heart and mind to work together. Each has a different function. The heart with its emotions is a great fiery powerhouse that can drive us to go beyond ourselves and accomplish things we never thought we could. The mind, cool and detached, is like a navigator, which can let us look at things objectively and tell us in which direction will we really be happiest if we go. By hooking up the two, with the mind leading the heart, we will not only 'get somewhere,' but be happy once we get there.

Genesis 34:27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28 את Their sheep ואת *and* their oxen ואת *and* their donkeys ואת *and* that which *was* in the city ואת *and* that which *was* in the field, they took. 29 ואת *And* all their wealth ואת *and* all their little ones ואת *and* their wives they took captive and plundered ואת *even* all that *was* in the houses. C-MATS

Question: Did Jacob's sons do what was right by taking all the inhabitants possessions? Since the entire city shared responsibility for the attack on Dinah (no one came to Dinah's rescue), all the people were responsible to compensate the family for its humiliation.

Question: What happened when Simeon and Levi went to Shechem to kill the inhabitants? Twenty young men had concealed themselves who were not circumcised, and these young men fought against Simeon and Levi. Simeon and Levi killed eighteen of them, and two fled from them and escaped to some lime pits that were in the city, and Simeon and Levi sought for them, but could not find them. Simeon and Levi continued to go about in the city, and they killed all the people of the city at the edge of the sword, and they left none remaining. They brought away Dinah from the house of Shechem. The sons of Jacob went to the city and spoiled all their property, which was in the city and the field. While they were taking the spoil, three hundred men stood up and threw dust at them and struck them with stones. Simeon turned to them and he killed them all with the edge of the sword. Among the women was a young damsel of beautiful appearance and well favored, whose name was Bunah, and Simeon took her for a wife. (Jasher)

Genesis 34:30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, You have troubled אתי *me* and made me stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and *since* I *am* few in number *they* will gather themselves together against me and kill me; and I will be destroyed, me and my house. 31 And they said, Should *we allow him* to *treat* את our sister *like* a harlot? C-MATS

Question: Why was Jacob punished by the abduction of Dinah? Nearly 22 years earlier Jacob had vowed that Beth-El would be the site of יהוה's house. Now יהוה commanded him to return there implying that he must fulfill the vow without delay. Because he had not done so sooner, he had been punished by the abduction of Dinah. Jacob's failure to promptly carry out his vow caused him to forfeit the Divine aura of protection. As a result there was no miraculous intercession to protect Dinah from Shechem. A further outgrowth of the incident was that the surrounding cities hated Jacob and his family, frightening them, and putting them in jeopardy. As soon as Jacob went to Beth-El and fulfilled his vow, יהוה cast His fear upon all the cities so they were no longer a danger to Jacob. *Chumash*

Discuss: Is there anything that you have promised to do for יהוה that you have not done that may hinder your protection by יהוה? Are you doing things that you know are not right that may hinder your protection from יהוה?

Jacob at Bethel (future site of יהוה's house)

Genesis 35:1 And Elohim said to Jacob, Arise, go *to* Bethel and live there: and make an altar to Elohim who appeared to you when you fled from Esau your brother. 2 Then Jacob said to his household and to all that *were* with him, Put away ־את gods that *are* foreign among you and be clean and change your garments. C-MATS

Question: What gods was Jacob referring to? The gods that they had taken in the booty of Shechem. *Chumash*

Question: Why was Jacob concerned about their garments? Some of the garments taken from Shechem may have been used in idol worship. Jacob wanted their clothes clean when standing before יהוה. *Chumash*

Genesis 35:3 And let us go to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to Elohim, who answered אתי *me* in the day of my distress and was with me *along* the way that I went. 4 And they gave to Jacob את all the foreign יהוהs which *were* in their hands ־ואת *and all their* earrings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid אתם *them* under the oak which *was* by Shechem. C-MATS

Jacob at Bethel

Question: When did Jacob find out that Rachel had the gods of Laban? Jacob was astonished by this act of his sons and he was afraid. **יהוה** told him to have courage and purify his tents, and to offer those sacrifices, which he had vowed to offer when he went first into Mesopotamia, and saw his vision. As he was therefore purifying his followers of all the idols that may have been in the booty from Shechem, he found the gods of Laban; (for he did not know they were stolen by Rachel) and he hid them in the earth, under an oak, in Shechem. *Chumash*

Genesis 35:5 And they journeyed: and the terror of Elohim was upon the cities that *were* round about and they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. C-MATS

Question: What happened to the two young men who escaped Simeon and Levi? And these men left the city and went to the city of Tapnach, and they told the inhabitants of Tapnach all that the sons of Jacob had done to the city of Shechem. Jashub king of Tapnach called the other kings around them. The seven kings of the Amorites assembled with all their armies, about ten thousand men with drawn swords, and they came to fight against the sons of Jacob; and Jacob heard that the kings of the Amorites had assembled to fight against his sons, and Jacob was greatly afraid, and it distressed him. Judah said unto Simeon and Levi, and unto all his brothers, "Strengthen yourselves and be sons of valor, for **יהוה** our Elohim is with us, do not fear them. Stand forth each man, put on his weapons of war, his bow and his sword, and we will go and fight against these uncircumcised men; **יהוה** is our Elohim, He will save us."

All the kings of the Amorites came and took their stand in the field to consult with their counselors what was to be done with the sons of Jacob, for they were still afraid of them, saying, “Behold, two of them killed the whole of the city of Shechem.” And יהוה heard the prayers of Isaac and Jacob, and he filled the hearts of all these kings' advisers with great fear and terror. And the kings turned and refrained from the sons of Jacob, for they did not approach them to make war with them, for they were greatly afraid of them. (Jasher)

Jacob built an altar

Genesis 35:6 So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, that *is,* Bethel, he and all the people that *were* with him. 7 And he built there an altar and called the place El-beth-el: because there Elohim appeared to him, when he fled from his brother. C-MATS

Question: How old was Jacob when he went to Bethel? And Jacob was 99 years old when he went up to Bethel and Jacob remained in Bethel in Luz, and he built an altar to יהוה who appeared unto him, and Jacob and his sons remained in Bethel six months. (Jasher)

Question: How old was Jacob when Rachel conceived Benjamin? And Jacob was 100 years old when יהוה appeared unto him, and blessed him and called his name Israel, and Rachel the wife of Jacob conceived in those days. (Jasher)

Genesis 35:8 But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse died and she was buried beneath Bethel under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth (*oak of weeping*). C-MATS

Question: When did Rebekah and her nurse Deborah die? At that time Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, died who had been with Jacob, and Jacob buried her beneath Bethel under an oak that was there. And Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel, the mother of Jacob, also died at that time in Hebron, the same is Kireath-arba, and she was buried in the Cave of Machpelah, which Abraham had bought from the children of Heth. The life of Rebekah was 133 years and she died. When Jacob heard that his mother Rebekah was dead he wept bitterly for his mother, and made a great mourning for her, and for Deborah her nurse beneath the oak, and he called the name of that place Allon-bachuth (oak of weeping). (Jasher)

Question: How did Laban die? Laban the Syrian died in those days (close to Rebekah's death). יהוה killed him because he transgressed the peace covenant that existed between him and Jacob. (Jasher)

Genesis 35:9 And Elohim appeared to Jacob again when he came out of Padan-aram (*plain of Aram*) and blessed אתו *him*. 10 And Elohim said to him, Your name *is* Jacob, but your name will no *longer* be called Jacob, but Israel will be your name: and He called ־את his name Israel. C-MATS

Question: Did יהוה change Jacob's name permanently? Although both Abraham and Jacob were given new names, there is a basic difference between them, because Abram was always referred to as Abraham once his name was changed. Verse 10 begins with the phrase "**Your name is Jacob**", a clear indication that this was to remain his name, in addition to the new name of Israel. In some places in scripture, he is referred to as Jacob and in some places he is referred to as Israel. *Chumash*

Genesis 35:11 And Elohim said to him, I *am* El Shaddai: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations will *come from* you and kings will come out of your loins. C-MATS

Question: What does "**Shaddai**" mean? Shaddai comes from the word sufficiency, so that Name has the connotation "The One Who is Sufficient," and it signifies, depending on the context in which the Name is used, that יהוה has sufficient power to bless, for the blessings are His, and He weighs and measures how much blessing one requires or deserves, and conversely, how much suffering one can bear without breaking under the strain (Rashi). *Chumash*

Genesis 35:12 ־וְאת *And* the land, which I gave Abraham and Isaac, I will give it to you and to your descendants אתן *will I give* ־את the land. 13 And Elohim went up from him in the place where He talked אתו *with him*. 14 And Jacob set up a stone pillar in the place where He talked אתו *with him*: and he poured a drink *offering* on it and he poured oil on it. 15 And called Jacob ־את *the* name of the place where Elohim spoke אתו *with him*, Bethel (*House of* El). 16 And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was a *short* way to Ephrath (*fruitfulness*): and Rachel travailed and she had hard labor. C-MATS

Rachel dies in childbirth

Genesis 35:17 When she was in hard labor that the midwife said to her, *Do not be afraid*; you *will have another* son. 18 As her soul was departing she called his name Ben-oni (*son of my sorrow*): but his father called him Benjamin (*son of the right hand*). C-MATS

Question: What does Ben-oni mean? Son of My Mourning, as if to say: His birth caused my death (Ibn Ezra; Ramban). *Chumash*

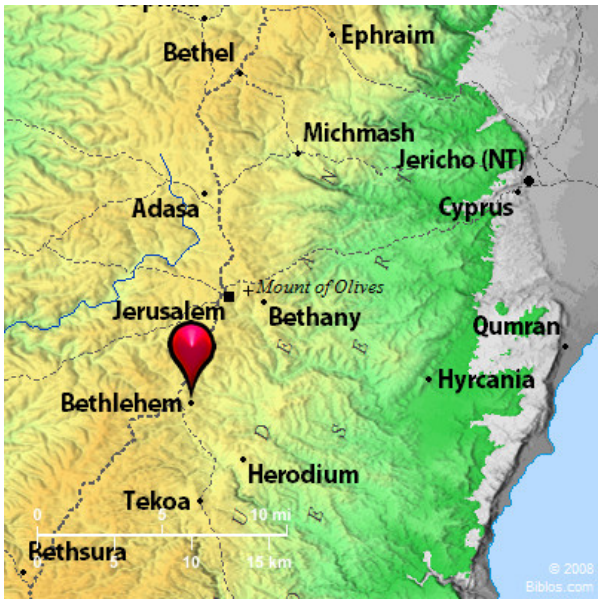
Question: What does Benjamin mean? The name is a contraction of the words son of the right, that is, son of the south, since the south is to the right of someone facing the east (the primary direction in Israelite thought). Thus, the name honors Benjamin as the only one of Jacob's children born in Canaan, which is south of Paddan-aram. (b) The word days can mean "son of my days," as if to say that Benjamin was born in Jacob's advanced years. *Chumash*

Question: Did Jacob know how many sons that he was going to have? Jacob and the Matriarchs knew prophetically that twelve would be the number of the tribes of Israel. Rachel had been barren for many years. She had seen not only her sisters but the maidservants give birth before her, and she longed for one more son. Now she was finally pregnant. On the way to the home she had never seen and eight years after the birth of her son Joseph, she gave birth to her cherished second son. *Chumash*

Question: Does יהוה pass judgment on a woman when she is in labor according to her sins? A woman's account is examined in heaven when she is in labor. Rachel improperly stole her father's household יהוה without Jacob's knowledge **(And Laban went to shear אֶת־ his sheep: and had stolen, Rachel, אֶת־ the images that *were* her fathers. Genesis 31:19).** Jacob told Laban, "**With whomever you find את־ your gods, let him *die*:**" (Genesis 31:32). As a result, she was to be punished; but the judgment against her was not carried out until she was in childbirth. The idea that people are judged in times of danger is expressed in the adage, "When the ox is fallen, the knife is sharpened" (Midrash Lekach Tov). It may also be that יהוה delayed her death until she could give birth to Benjamin, for otherwise this woman of historic righteousness would have been denied her full share in the building of the nation. Chumash

Tomb of Rachel

Rachel's Tomb is located in the central West Bank on the outskirts of Bethlehem, Israel. It is a popular tourist attraction visited by tens of thousands each year. This traditional gravesite of the Biblical Matriarch Rachel is regarded by Jewish as their 3rd holiest site. Rachel's Tomb is a place where barren women would pray to have children.



Rachel dies in Bethlehem

Genesis 35:19 And Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which *is* Bethlehem (*house of bread*). C-MATS

Question: Where did Rachel die? And while they were going on the road not far from Ephrath, Rachel gave birth to a son and she had hard labor and she died. And Jacob buried her on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem, and he set a pillar upon her grave, which is there unto this day. (Jasher)

Question: Where is Rachel buried? She was buried on the outside of Bethlehem, but the city has grown until the tomb is now inside the city and is still there to this day. The land surrounding the burial site was given to Rachel's son Benjamin.

Question: Why was Rachel buried on the roadside? Jacob did not wish to bury her in the Cave of Machpelah because he married her after he was already married to her sister Leah -- a marriage of the sort that the Torah would later forbid -- and "he would have been embarrassed before his ancestors," had she been with him in the Cave. *Chumash*

Question: Why did Rachel die before she reached the Promised Land? It was outside the Land that Jacob would be married to both Rachel and Leah, but in the Land with its high degree of righteousness, he would never have married Rachel after having been married to Leah. Torah would later forbid a man to be married to two sisters. *Chumash*

Question: How old was Rachel when she died? Rachel was born on the day Jacob received his father's blessing. Jacob was 63 then, and 99 when he entered the Land, Rachel died at 36. *Chumash*

Genesis 35:20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that *is* the pillar on Rachel's grave to this day. 21 And Israel journeyed and spread his tent on *the other side of* the tower of Edar (*flock of animals*). 22 *After* Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and laid with את Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard *about it.* C-MATS

Question: How did Reuben defile his father's bed? And it was after the death of Rachel, that Jacob established his primary residence in the tent of her handmaid Bilhah. And Reuben was jealous for his mother Leah on account of this, and he was filled with anger, and he rose up in his anger and went and entered the tent of Bilhah and he removed his father's bed and put it in the tent of Leah. At that time the portion of birthright, together with the kingly and priestly offices, was removed from the sons of Reuben, for he had profaned his father's bed, and the birthright was given unto Joseph, the kingly office to Judah, and the priesthood unto Levi, because Reuben had defiled his father's bed. (Jasher)

Question: Why did Jacob move his bed into Bilhah's tent? Jacob moved to Bilhah's tent to honor Rachel's memory because he had labored fourteen years for the right to marry her and she had been the mainstay of his household. In tribute to her, he assigned this honor to her loyal maidservant, for even after Bilhah's marriage to Jacob, Bilhah continued to serve Rachel loyally (Maharsha). It may also be that Jacob did so because Bilhah was raising the eight-year-old Joseph and the infant Benjamin, who were not only his youngest children, but the only survivors of his most beloved wife. *Chumash*

Question: Why was Reuben's act of moving his father's bed such a sin? The Torah describes it as adultery because he interfered with another's right to conducting his married life as he saw fit. The privacy of the marital relationship is a prerequisite to sanctity. Chumash

Question: Did Reuben "**Jacob's firstborn"** lose his inheritance because of his sin? Although the birthright was later transferred from Reuben to Joseph (**1 Chronicles 5:1 And the sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel for he was the first-born; but, because as he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel**), the verse calls Reuben the firstborn to indicate that he would continue to have certain privileges of his status. Joseph would receive a double share of Israel because Jacob would later give his sons Ephraim and Manasseh the status of separate tribes. Reuben, however, would be considered the firstborn in the following ways: (a) regarding the inheritance for he personally received a double share of Jacob's estate and his tribe would be the first to receive its share of Israel (Yafeh To'ar); (b) regarding the sacrificial service for before the sin of the Golden Calf the altar service was performed by the firstborn (Matanos Kehunah)]; and (c) regarding the census, for the tribe of Reuben was always the first to be counted (Rashi). *Chumash*

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.

Genesis 35:23 The sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's firstborn and Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulun. 24 The sons of Rachel; Joseph and Benjamin: 25 And the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant; Dan and Naphtali: 26 And the sons of Zilpah, Leah's maidservant, Gad and Asher: these *are* the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram. C-MATS

Question: What is the hidden message given to us in the names of Jacob's children? The meaning of the names of the children of Jacob (*Israel*) tells us a Hidden Message of the Gospel Story of the Messiah in the order of their birth:

- **Leah: Reuben means a *son*, (the Messiah came as יהוה *son*)**
- **Leah: Simeon means *hated/hearing*, (He will be *hated* by some, but we should *hear* and listen to Him)**
- **Leah: Levi means *loved/attached* (we should *love* Him and be *attached* to Him)**
- **Leah: Judah means *praise/thankful* (we should *praise* Him and be *thankful*)**
- **Bilhah, Rachel's maid: Dan means *vindicated,* (because He will *vindicate* us)**
- **Bilhah: Naphtali means *struggle/prevail*, (by His *suffering*, we will *prevail*)**
- **Zilpah, Leah's maid: Gad means *good fortune/fortunate*, (we are so *fortunate*)**
- **Zilpah: Asher means *happy/joyful*, (and we will be *joyful*)**
- **Leah: Issachar means *wages*, (for He paid our *wages* of sin)**
- **Leah: Zebulun means *live with honor* (soon He will *live* with us)**
- **Leah: Dinah means the *bride/justice* (and make us His *bride*)**
- **Rachel: Joseph means *may he add,* (He will *add to us*)**
- **Rachel: Ben-Oni means *son of my sorrow*; Benjamin means *son of my right hand*, (He is יהוה *son, a man of sorrow and the right hand of Elohim*) C-MATS**

Genesis 35:27 And Jacob came to Isaac his father *in* Mamre, *to* the city of Arbah, which *is* Hebron, *the place* where Abraham and Isaac lived. 28 And the days of Isaac were 180 years. 29 And Isaac died and was gathered to his people, *being* old and full of days: and his sons Esau and Jacob buried אתו *him.* C-MATS

Question: What does "***being* old and full of days"** mean? Isaac was satisfied with his days; he was fully content with what each day brought him and he had no desire that the future should bring him something new. This is a further example of יהוה's mercy toward the righteous, in that they are content with their lot and desire no luxuries (Ramban). *Chumash*

Question: What does contentment mean? An internal satisfaction which does not demand changes in external circumstances—*Holman Bible Dictionary*. Paul learned how to be content. **"…for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.." Phil.4:11** Paul knew who supplied what he needed. **"But my Elohim shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Mashiach Yahusha. Phil.4:19.** We often do not understand the difference between "need" and "want." The basic needs we all share are food, clothing and shelter. And all "things" beyond that are nice, but not absolutely necessary!

Question: Do you desire to be wealthy? **For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.** (Psalm 103:14). Doesn't יהוה know what is best for you and will always take steps to ensure that you have what you need? Maybe you cannot handle wealth and therefore יהוה does not let you have it. Maybe wealth would lead you into sin and away from Him.

Question: Is יהוה blessing you with riches? If so, remember that you are His steward and make every effort to give generously to His work. Then thank Him daily for entrusting you with such good things—all the while keeping in mind that they could be taken away.

Question: Are you practically destitute? Could it be your predicament is the result of being fiscally irresponsible? Did you spend your way into debt? Most believers who fall upon hard times have no one to blame but themselves. If this has happened to you, pray and ask יהוה for forgiveness, and then make every effort to use better judgment in the future.

Spiritual Exercise: Learn to be content with what יהוה has given you, because only He knows what you need. Are you content with what you are given each day and desire no luxury? This week try to remain content with what you have been given by יהוה.

Cenotaph of Isaac and Rebekah

Three major rooms make up the Machpelah. In the center are Abraham and Sarah. On the east side are Isaac and Rebekah; the Jewish people are allowed to visit here only ten days a year. On the west side are the cenotaphs of Jacob and Leah. Rachel was buried near Bethlehem.

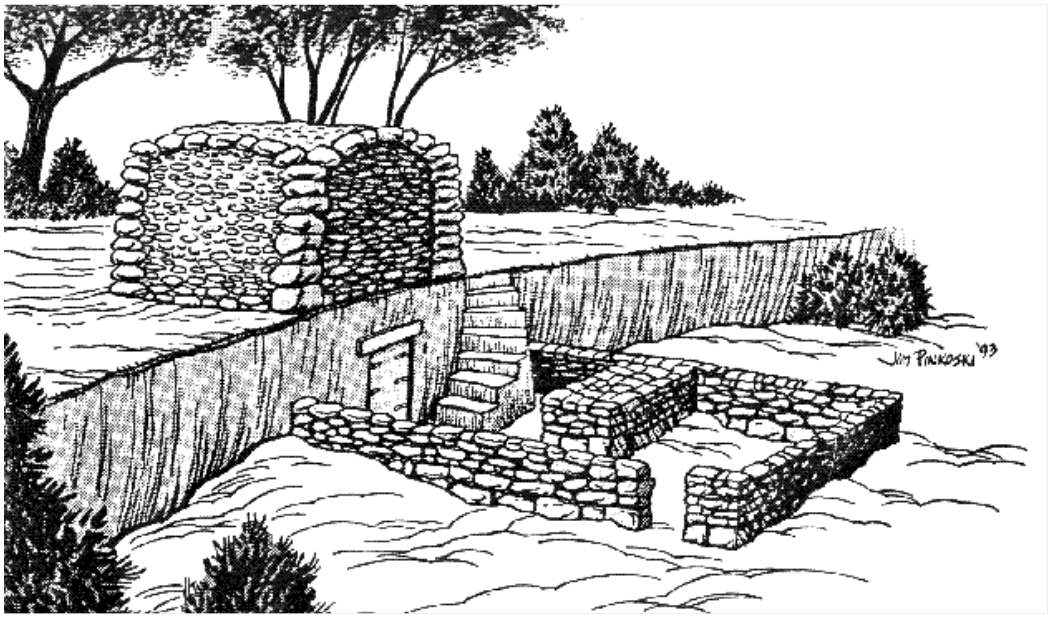
Cenotaph of Abraham and Sarah

The cenotaphs of Abraham and Sarah were added after the city moved to surround this complex in 8th c. A.D. All the cenotaphs were in their present position by the 10th c. A.D. The Mamluks gave the cenotaphs of Jacob and Leah their present form in the 14th century.

Cave of Machpelah in Hebron

Crusader Ceiling

Ownership of the Machpelah has changed with each conquering army. The Byzantines converted it into a church before the Muslims conquered and made it a mosque. The Crusaders and Mamluks then made it a church and a mosque again, respectively. The interior of the compound was originally not roofed; the ceiling is the work of Crusader artisans.



Above, a reconstruction of one side of the "monument" complex directly above the cave. The entrance into the cave can be seen.

Descendants of Esau

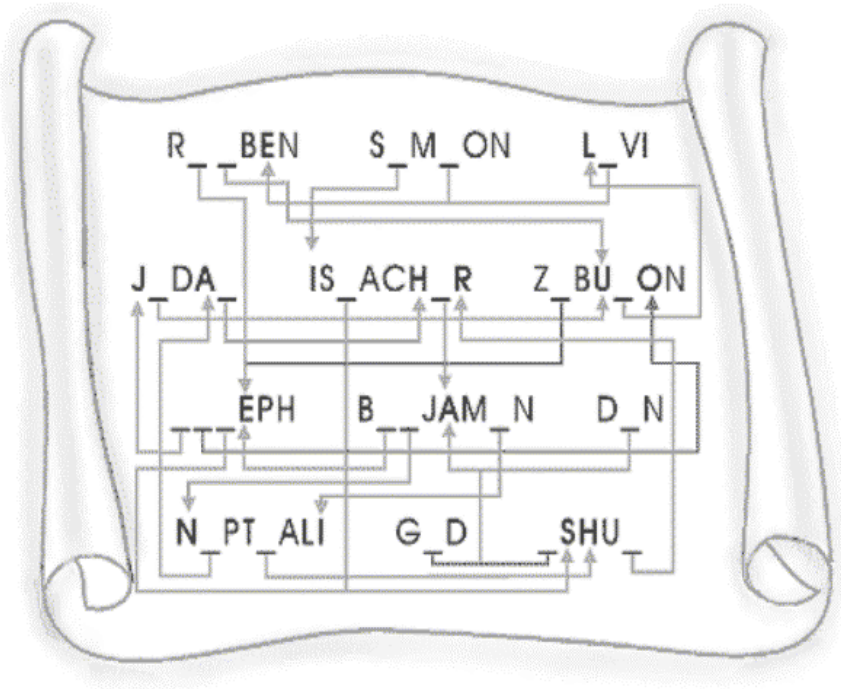
Genesis 36:1 Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom. 2 Esau took את his wives from the daughters of Canaan; את Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; 3 And Bashemath, Ishmael's daughter sister of Nebajoth. 4 And Adah gave birth to Esau את Eliphaz; and Bashemath gave birth to את Reuel; 5 And Aholibamah gave birth to את Jeush and Jaalam and Korah: these are the sons of Esau, who were born to him in the land of Canaan. 6 And took Esau את his wives and his sons and his daughters and all the persons of his house and his cattle and all his beasts and all his substance, which he had accumulated in the land of Canaan; and went into the country away from his brother Jacob. 7 Because their riches were too great to live together; and the land in which they were strangers could not bear them because of all their cattle. 8 So Esau lived in mount Seir: Esau is Edom. 9 And these are the generations of Esau, the father of the Edomites, in mount Seir: 10 These are the names of Esau's sons, Eliphaz, the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel, the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau. 11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho and Gatam and Kenaz. 12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz, Esau's son; and she gave birth to Eliphaz Amalek: these were the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. 13 And these are the sons of Reuel; Nahath and Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath, Esau's wife. 14 And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife: and she gave birth to Esau את Jeush and Jaalam and Korah. 15 These are dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz, the firstborn son of Esau; duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz, 16 Duke Korah, duke Gatam and duke Amalek: these are the dukes that came from Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah. 17 And these are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah: these are the dukes that came from Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Bashemath, Esau's wife. 18 And these are the sons of Aholibamah, Esau's wife; duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these were the dukes that came from Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, Esau's wife. 19 These are the sons of Esau, who is Edom and these are their dukes.
20 These are the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land, Lotan and Shobal and Zibeon and Anah, 21 And Dishon and Ezer and Dishan: these are the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom. 22 And the children of Lotan were Hori and Hemam; and Lotan's sister was Timna. 23 And the children of Shobal were these, Alvan and Manahath and Ebal, Shepho and Onam. 24 And these are the children of Zibeon; both Ajah and Anah: this was the Anah that found את the mules in the wilderness as he fed את the donkeys of Zibeon his father. 25 And the children of Anah were these, Dishon and Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah. 26 And these are the children of Dishon, Hemdan and Eshban and Ithran and Cheran. 27 The children of Ezer are these: Bilhan and Zaavan and Akan. 28 The children of Dishan are these: Uz and Aran. 29 These are the dukes that came from the Horites: duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, 30 Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, and duke Dishan: these are the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir. 31 And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom before there reigned any king over the sons of Israel. 32 And Bela, the son of Beor, reigned in Edom: and the name of his city was Dinhabah. 33 And Bela died and Jobab, the son of Zerah of Bozrah, reigned in his stead. 34 And Jobab died and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead. 35 And Husham died and Hadad, the son of Bedad, who attacked את Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Avith (ruin). 36 And Hadad died and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

37 And Samlah died and Saul of Rehoboth by the river reigned in his stead. 38 And Saul died and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead. 39 And Baal-hanan, the son of Achbor, died and Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city was Pau (scream); and his wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab. 40 And these are the names of the dukes that came from Esau, according to their families, places and names: duke Timnah, duke Alvah, duke Jetheth, 41 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon, 42 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar, 43 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these are the dukes of Edom, according to their settlements in the land they owned: he is Esau, the father of the Edomites. C-MATS

Do You Know?

1. Jacob fought with an angel to get a ____
2. Jacob's ____ was hurt in the fight with the angel
3. Jacob's new name
4. Jacob had not seen Esau for ___ years.
5. The city where Esau lived
6. Esau came to meet Jacob with ___ men.
7. Jacob prepared to meet Esau by readying for battle, praying, and sending _____ to Esau.
8. Esau ___ Jacob when he saw him.
9. Jacob bought land in ____.
10. _____ was raped by Shechem
11. The men of Shechem had to be ___ before they could enter a covenant of peace with the sons of Jacob.
12. ___ and ____ avenged Dinah
13. Levi was ___ years old when he attacked Shechem
14. Rachel's second son
15. Rachel was buried in _____
16. Rachel died at ____ years old
17. ____ defiled his father Jacob’s bed
18. Reuben lost his ___ when he sinned against his father Jacob

Bonus: Who were the sons of Jacob?



Answers:

1. blessing
2. hip
3. Israel
4. 34
5. Seir
6. 400
7. gifts
8. kissed
9. Shechem
10. Dinah
11. circumcised
12. Simeon, Levi
13. 13
14. Benjamin
15. Bethlehem
16. 36
17. Reuben
18. birthright

Bonus: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulon, Joseph, Benjamin, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher

Question: What happened after Jacob returned to Shechem? All the inhabitants of the land were afraid of the sons of Jacob. Twenty-one kings decided to make peace with the sons of Jacob and the sons of Jacob listened to them, and formed a covenant with them. And these kings urged the sons of Jacob and begged of them to return all the spoil they had captured from the seven cities of the Amorites, and the sons of Jacob did so, and they returned all that they had captured, the women, the little ones, the cattle and all the spoil which they had taken, and they sent them off, and they went away each to his city. And all these kings again bowed down to the sons of Jacob, and they brought them many gifts in those days, and the sons of Jacob sent off these kings and their men, and they went peaceably away from them to their cities, and the sons of Jacob also returned to their home in Shechem. And there was peace from that day forward between the sons of Jacob and the kings of the Canaanites, until the children of Israel came to inherit the land of Canaan. Jashar

Haftorah

This week's Haftorah mentions the punishment of Edom, the descendents of Esau, whose conflict with Jacob is chronicled in this week's Torah reading. The prophet Obadiah, himself an Edomian convert to Judaism, describes the punishment destined for the nation of Edom. The Edomites did not come to Judea's aid when she was being destroyed by the Babylonians, and even joined in the carnage. Many years later the Edomites (the Roman Empire) themselves destroyed the Second Temple and mercilessly killed and enslaved their Judean cousins. Though the Roman Empire was one of the mightiest to ever inhabit the earth, the prophet forewarned of their destruction by the house of Jacob.

Obadiah 1:1 The vision of Obadiah: So said Adonai יהוה concerning Edom; We have heard a rumor מֵאֵת *from* יהוה an ambassador is sent among the heathen, arise and let us rise up against her in battle. 2 See I have made you small among the heathen: אַתָּה *you* are greatly despised. 3 The pride of your heart has deceived you, you that live in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that say in your heart, Who will bring me down *to the* ground? 4 Though you exalt *yourself* as the eagle and though you set your nest among the stars, from there will I bring you down, says יהוה. 5 If thieves came to you, if robbers by night, *how are you cut off!* Would they not have stolen until they had enough? If the grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave *some* grapes? 6 How are *the things* of Esau searched out! *How* are his hidden *things* sought up! 7 All the men of your confederacy have brought you *even* to the border: the men that were at peace with you have deceived you and prevailed against you; *they that eat* your bread have laid a wound under you: *there is* no understanding in him. 8 Will I not in that day, declares יהוה, even destroy the wise men out of Edom and understanding out of the Mount of Esau? 9 And your mighty *men*, O Teman, will be dismayed, to the end that everyone of the Mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter. 10 For your violence *against* your brother Jacob shame will cover you and you will be cut off forever. 11 In the day *that* you stood on the other side, in the day *that* the strangers carried away captive his forces and foreigners entered into his gates and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even אַתָּה *you* were as one of them. 12 But you should not have looked on the day of your brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither should you have rejoiced over the Children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither should you have spoken proudly in the day of distress. C-MATS

13 You should not have entered into the gate of My people in the day of their calamity; indeed, אַתָּה *you* should not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid *hands* on their substance in the day of their calamity; 14 Neither should you have stood in the crossway, to cut off אֶת־ those of his that did escape; neither should you have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress. 15 For the day of יהוה *is* near upon all the heathen: as you have done, it will be done to you: your reward will return upon your own head. 16 For as you have drunk upon My sacred mountain, *so* will all the heathen drink continually, indeed, they will drink and they will swallow down and they will be as though they had not been. 17 But upon Mount Zion will be deliverance and there will be holiness; and will possess, *the* House of Jacob אֵת their possessions. 18 And *the* House of Jacob will be a fire and *the* House of Joseph a flame and the House of Esau for stubble and they will kindle in them and devour them; and there will not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for יהוה has spoken *it*. 19 And will possess *they of* the south אֶת־ Mount of Esau; and they of the plain אֶת־ *the* Philistines: and they will possess אֶת־ *the* fields of Ephraim וְאֵת *and the* fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *will possess* אֶת־ Gilead. 20 And the captivity of this host of *the* Children of Israel *will possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* to Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which *is* in Sepharad, will possess אֵת cities of the south. 21 And saviors will come up on Mount Zion to judge אֶת־ the Mount of Esau; and the kingdom will be to ליהוה. C-MATS

Hosea 11:7 And My people are bent to backsliding from Me: though they call to the most High, none at all would exalt *Him*. 8 How will I give you up, Ephraim? *How* will I deliver you, Israel? *How* will I make you as Admah (*earth/soil*)? How will I set you as Zeboim (*gazelles*)? My heart is turned within Me, my repenting is kindled together. 9 I will not execute the fierceness of My anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I *am* El (*G-d*) and not man; the Holy One in the midst of you: and I will not enter into the city. 10 They will walk after יהוה: He will roar like a lion: when He will roar, then the children will tremble from the west. 11 They will tremble as a bird out of Egypt and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses, says יהוה. 12 Ephraim compasses Me about with lies and *the* House of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruled with Elohim and is faithful with the saints. Hosea 12:1 Ephraim feeds on wind and followed after the east wind: he daily increased lies and desolation; and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians and oil is carried into Egypt. 2 יהוה *has* also a controversy with Judah and will punish Jacob according to his ways; according to his doings will He recompense him. 3 In the womb he took by the heel אֶת־ his brother and by his strength he had power *with* אֶת־ Elohim: 4 Indeed, he had power over the angel and prevailed: he wept and made supplication to him: he found him *in* Bethel and there he spoke with us; 5 And ויהוה Elohim of hosts; יהוה *is* His memorial. 6 וְאַתָּה *And you*, turn to your Elohim: keep mercy and judgment and wait on your Elohim continually. 7 He is a merchant, the balances of deceit *are* in his hand: he loves to oppress. 8 And Ephraim said, Yet I am become rich, מָצָאתִי *I found* substance: *in* all my labors they will find no iniquity in *me* that *was* sin. 9 And I *that am* יהוה your Elohim from the land of Egypt will yet make you to live in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast. 10 I have also spoken by the prophets and I have multiplied visions and used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets. 11 *Is there* iniquity in Gilead? Certainly they are vanity: they sacrifice bullocks in Gilgal; indeed, their altars *are* as heaps in the furrows of the fields. 12 And Jacob fled *into the* country of Syria and Israel served for a wife and for a wife he kept *sheep*. C-MATS

Brit Chadashah

Matthew 26:36 Then came Yahusha with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and said unto the disciples, Sit you here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then said he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry you here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as you will. 40 And he came unto the disciples, and found them asleep, and said unto Peter, What, could you not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. 42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, your will be done. 43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. 44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then he came to his disciples, and said unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that does betray me. C-MATS

1 Corinthians 5:1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that has done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that has so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Adonai Yahusha *haMashiach*, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Adonai Yahusha haMashiach, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of Adonai Yahusha. 6 Your glorying is not good. Know you not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Mashiach our Passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must you needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not you judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without Elohim judges. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. C-MATS

Revelation 7:1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. 2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living Elohim: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our Elohim in their foreheads. C-MATS

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.
5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.
6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.
7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.
8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand.
Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.
9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our Elohim which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. 11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped Elohim, 12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our Elohim forever and ever. Amen. C-MATS

PIECE OFFERING

"What? You forgot to bring straws!" Tony exclaimed with a scowl on his face to Ritchie and Dan, his two younger brothers, as they put the tray of pizza slices and drinks down on the restaurant table. "Don't either of you have a single brain in your head?"

"Sorry, Tony," Dan said nervously. Both he and Ritchie knew too well their big brother's even bigger temper. "I really looked, but I couldn't find them. Do you want me to go look for them some more?" he asked.

"Nah!" Tony waved him off. "You'll probably just mess it up again. I'll go get 'em myself."

With that, he got up and slammed his chair into the table as he stormed up to the service area, as if to make a point. The only problem was, he slammed it a little too hard, shaking the table and causing his slice of pizza that was sitting close to the table's edge to do a perfect nose-dive and land - cheese side down - onto the not-so-clean floor.

"Yuck!" said Dan as he picked it up, examining the dust balls and hairs now interspersed between the mushrooms and pepper slices.

"Tony's going to explode at us like a megaton of TNT when he comes back and finds out what happened," Ritchie said.

MEANWHILE...

Tony saw plastic cutlery, napkins, small packets of ketchup and every kind of spice - but no straws. Finally, he went over to the serving person who apologized and told him they had just run out and a new order was on its way in a little while. As Tony headed back to their table he felt kind of bad that he'd yelled at his brothers for no reason, but he wasn't sure if he felt bad enough to tell them that...

BACK AT THE TABLE...

"But it's not our fault it fell!" Dan protested.

"Did that ever stop Tony's temper before?" asked Ritchie. "I'm really afraid what's going to happen when we tell him."

"Me too," Dan said "But ... who said we have to tell him?"

"What?"

"We'll just quickly pick off the big pieces of dirt, put the slice back on his plate and that's it." He started doing that.

"But that's totally gross - and unhealthy - and who knows what else?" Ritchie said.

"Well, is it healthier to have our heads blown off by an angry older brother?"

Just as Dan had finished his 'clean-up' job, Tony came back. He was about to just sit down and dig in to his slice of pizza when he shrugged and said, "You guys were right - no straws. Sorry I got so mad before."

The two younger boys looked at each other, shocked but happy.

"Well, Tony," Dan said, now feeling a whole lot safer to tell the truth. "Something kinda happened to your pizza when you walked away. We were afraid to tell you, but..."

When Tony heard the news, his first reaction was to explode, but then he stopped himself and calmly went to buy a new slice. After all, what did his short-fuse temper get him, except almost a mouth full of dirt?

Question: How did Dan and Ritchie feel about telling Tony what happened, at first? They were scared of his temper, so they weren't going to tell him.

Question: How did they feel in the end? They saw he was sorry he got mad before, so they felt safe to tell him the truth.

Question: What life-lesson do you think Tony learned that day? He'd been used to letting his temper fly whenever something didn't go his way. But he saw that by being nicer to people, they would be more likely to help him out when they could.

Question: Why do you think Tony's brothers were going to let him eat filthy pizza? Although they knew it wasn't good for him, they were too intimidated by Tony's temper to say anything. A person, who easily loses his temper, usually ends up losing a lot more.

Resources: "Weekly Torah Portion" from www.aish.com

The Stone Edition of The Chumash

The Complete Messianic Aleph Tav Scriptures **C-MATS** www.AlephTavScriptures.com

The Book of Jashar. **Joshua 10:13 And the Sun stood still and the Moon stayed, until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies. *Is* not this written in the book of Jashar? And the Sun stayed in the midst of heaven and delayed not going down about a whole day.**