

וַיֵּצֵא

VAYETZE/AND HE WENT OUT Bereshith/Genesis 28:10-32:2

Our parasha begins with Ya'acov's exile from the Promised Land after securing all of his father's blessings and greatly angering his brother, Esav. As a result his parents are sending him to the house of his mother's brother, Lavan in Haran, with the hope of finding a wife there. Ya'acov is actually retracing the steps of Avraham's servant who had many years earlier taken all of Avraham's wealth as he set out on a mission to find a wife for Yitzchak. In contrast, Ya'acov leaves with absolutely nothing material to offer his prospective wife and her family. Despite his troubling circumstances, he doesn't get very far before he receives a comforting promise from ה'יהוה:

Bereshith 28:13 ... "I am יהוה Elohim of Avraham your father and the Elohim of Yitzchak; the Land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants."¹⁴ "Also your descendants shall be as the dust (aphar - אֶפְרָיִם) of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed."¹⁵ "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 spoken to you."¹⁶ Then Ya'acov awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely יהוה is in this place, and I did not know it."

Before he even leaves the Land, he knows that he will be returning with many blessings! His descendants will be so numerous that their numbers are compared to the "dust of the earth". The Torah also uses other similes to describe the many descendants of the patriarchs:

Bereshith 22:17 "blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore..."

Would you prefer to be compared to the twinkling "stars of the heaven" or maybe the beautiful white "sand which is on the seashore" or like the "dust of the earth"? In fact the word used in Bereshith 28:14 for "dust" (aphar - אֶפְרָיִם) also translates as "ashes", "dirt", or "rubbish". I'm sure Ya'acov appreciated the prophecy that his descendants would be a multitude of people, but did he wince just a bit to hear them described as the "dirt of the earth"?

Jewish commentators explain the phrase "dust of the earth" to illustrate more than numbers. In fact, it also can refer to an attribute of the Israelites. People tend to trample over the "dust of the earth," but in the end the "dust" always remains on top!! That same "dust" ultimately covers those who trample it! Ya'acov is told that his descendants will be crushed by the world, but the promise is that they will rise to the top like "dust"! "Dust" is that very element from which Adam was formed:

Bereshith 2:7 And יהוה Elohim formed man of the dust (aphar - אֶפְרָיִם) of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

When Adam died, he returned to "dust":

Bereshith 3:19 ... For out of it you were taken; For dust (aphar - אֶפְרָיִם) you are, And to dust (aphar - אֶפְרָיִם) you shall return."

Like the “*dust of the earth*”, the **descendants of Ya’acov can never be destroyed**. In fact, what a **constant reminder “dust”** is for us. **All of us find “dust” everywhere!** Now we can **look at it** in a whole **new light** and **praise the Father** for this awesome **reminder of His chosen people!**

Rav Michael Hattin makes a wonderful **parallel** of our **parasha** with the **later descent to Egypt** of Ya’acov’s family. Quoting **Hattin** (emphasis mind):

“The story of Egypt contains so many **obvious thematic similarities** that we may **almost regard** it as **exactly the same tale**. Thus, the **descent to Egypt begins** with the **exile from Canaan** of Ya’acov’s **offspring**. The **initially kind reception** of the **Pharaoh** soon **becomes the brutal reaction** of his namesake **successor**. The few **Israelites** nevertheless **persevere** to become many in **spite of Egypt’s cruel preventative measures**. **Israel** eventually merits ‘**miraculous**’ **delivery from bondage** and **ventures forth accompanied by great wealth**. **Pharaoh’s pursuit** leads to a **climactic confrontation** in which **Israel triumphs** while the **god-king’s hordes** are **defeated**. Again, the **constant and palpable presence of God** guides the chain of events to its **preordained conclusion**.”

Hattin considers the **literary parallels** between the two events:

- Ya’acov “**works**” (*avad* - אָוַד) for Lavan
Bereshith 29:20 So Ya’acov **served** (*vayavod* - וַיַּעֲבֹד) seven years for Rachel...
- Israel “**works**” (*avad* - אָוַד) for Pharaoh
Shemot 1:13 So the Egyptians made the children of Israel **serve** (*vayavidu* - וַיַּעֲבִדוּ) ...
- Elohim “**sees**” (*ra’ah* - רָאָה) Ya’acov’s bondage
Bereshith 31:12 ... I have **seen** (*ra’iti* - רָאִיתִי) all that Lavan is doing to you.
- יהוה “**sees**” (*ra’ah* - רָאָה) Israel’s oppression in Egypt
Shemot 3:7 And יהוה said: “I have **surely seen** (*raoh ra’iti* - רָאִיתִי רָאָה) the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.
- Ya’acov’s family and wealth increase “**greatly**” (*me’ode* - מְאוֹדָּה):
Bereshith 30:43 Thus the man became **exceedingly prosperous** (*me’ode me’ode* - מְאוֹדָּה מְאוֹדָּה), and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.
- Israel multiplies “**abundantly**” (*me’ode* - מְאוֹדָּה):
Shemot 1:7 But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and **grew exceedingly** (*bemode me’ode* - בְּמֹדָּה מְאוֹדָּה) mighty; and the land was filled with them.
- Ya’acov “**flees**” (*barach* - בָּרַח) from Lavan’s rage:
Bereshith 31:21 **So he fled** (*vayivrach* - וַיִּבְרַח) with all that he had. He arose and crossed the river...

- Israel “flees” (*barach* - בָּרַח) from Pharaoh:
Shemot 14:5 Now it was told the king of Egypt that the people had **fled** (*barach* - בָּרַח), and the heart of Pharaoh and his servants was turned against the people...
- Lavan is “told” (*nagad* - נָגַד) that Ya’acov has fled:
Bereshith 31:22 **And Lavan was told** (*vayugad* - וַיִּגַּד) on the third day that Ya’acov had fled.
- Pharaoh is “told” (*nagad* - נָגַד) that Israel has escaped:
Shemot 14:5 **Now it was told** (*vayugad* - וַיִּגַּד) the king of Egypt that the people had fled...
- Lavan “pursues” (*radaph* - רָדַף) Ya’acov:
Bereshith 31:23 **Then he** took his brethren with him and **pursued** (*vayirdof* - וַיִּרְדֹּף) him for seven days’ journey...
- Pharaoh “pursues” (*radaph* - רָדַף) the Israelites:
Shemot 14:8 And הִקִּיחַ hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, **and he pursued** (*vayirdof* - וַיִּרְדֹּף) the children of Israel; and the children of Israel went out with boldness.

So it’s not hard to see that the **story of Ya’acov** and his **experience with Lavan** is **virtually the same story** as **Israel’s experience with Pharaoh**. They are both stories of **exile** and **restoration**, however the **story of Israel** has an **added detail**. **Redemption and restoration occurs as a result of the blood of the lamb!**

Shemot 12:13 'Now the **blood shall be a sign** for you on the houses where you are. And **when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.**

There is something else worth noting. **Ya’acov’s story** is the story of a **chosen individual** and his **family**. **Israel’s story** is about a **chosen people**. We could therefore expect that the **events of sister/wife rivalry, child rearing, struggles, and pain in Ya’acov’s family** could be seen as **examples of similar happenings on a future national scale**.

So **what can we learn from the complicated relationships of Ya’acov, Leah, and Rachel?** Let’s continue to **project out in time** to see the **similar trials and challenges that their descendents will face**. There are so many details, but we’ll focus on the main characters. **First** we have the **children of Leah**, whose son **Yehuda** (Judah) will **emerge as the dominant son**. **King David, King Solomon, and ultimately Yeshua the King of all Kings** will descend from **Yehuda**.

Rachel only has two sons, and many of the remaining chapters of *Bereshith* will be focused on **Yosef** (Joseph), her **dominant son**. Thus we find ourselves with a **son from Leah** and a **son from Rachel, Yehuda and Yosef**, whose **stories of rivalry and conflict will continue** throughout the **Hebrew Scriptures**. In fact, the **inability of Leah and Rachel to unite foreshadows the future division of the nation of Israel into two disconnected monarchies in the aftermath of King Solomon’s reign**.

So, to make a long story short, we end up with **two kingdoms** - the **kingdom of Ephraim** (son of Yosef) and the **Kingdom of Yehuda** who **continued to oppose each other**, sometimes **even warring against one another**. Thus what we see is an **extended case of sibling rivalry**, which first **began between the sisters, Leah and Rachel**, and **continued on through the descendants of their sons, Yehuda and Yosef!**

The **Kingdom of Yehuda** or what became the **southern kingdom** is usually easy to identify throughout the prophecies. The **Kingdom of Ephraim** or the **northern kingdom** is called a **variety of names** in the Scriptures:

1. The **House of Israel** (1 Kings 12:21, Jeremiah 31:31)
2. The **House of Joseph** (1 Kings 11:28, Zechariah 10:6)
3. **Samaria** (Hosea 7:1; 8:5-6; 13:16)
4. **Ephraim** (Hosea 4:17; 5:3; 7:1)

In the **8th century BCE**, the **Kingdom of Ephraim** was **exiled** by the **King of Assyria** (2 Kings 17:7-23); and 150 years later, the **Kingdom of Yehuda** was **exiled** by the **Babylonians** (Jeremiah 25:1-11).

- In our parasha, **Ya'acov an individual**, is **exiled**
- In Shemot, **Israel the nation**, is **exiled**
- Later in the Scriptures, **Israel splits** and **two separate exiles** occur

A **merciful Elohim** provided His people with a **prophecy** that spoke of the **restoration** of **both fragments of Israel**:

Ezekiel 37:15 Again the word of **יְהוָה** came to me, saying, ¹⁶ "As for you, son of man, **take a stick** (etz - עֵץ) for yourself and write on it: '**For Yehuda and for the children of Israel, his companions.**' Then take **another stick** (etz - עֵץ) and write on it, '**For Yosef, the stick (etz - עֵץ) of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.**' ¹⁷ "Then join them one to another for yourself into **one** (echad - אֶחָד) **stick** (etz - עֵץ), and they will become **one** (echad - אֶחָד) **in your hand.** ¹⁸ " And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?' -- ¹⁹ "say to them, 'Thus says Adonai **יְהוָה**': "Surely I will take the **stick** (etz - עֵץ) of Yosef, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the **stick** (etz - עֵץ) of Yehuda, and make them **one** (echad - אֶחָד) **stick** (etz - עֵץ), and they will be **one** (echad - אֶחָד) **in My hand.**" ²⁰ "And the **sticks** (etzim - עֵצִים) on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes.

The **Hebrew** word "etz" (עֵץ), translated as "stick" in the Ezekiel prophecy, can **also** be **translated** as "**tree**". This leads us to a **parallel** where "**wild olive tree**" branches and "**natural olive tree**" branches are **prophesied** to be **grafted back into** "**one (echad - אֶחָד) cultivated olive tree**". These "**two sticks**" are joined together to **become one** (echad - אֶחָד) in His hand and as a result "**all Israel will be saved**":

Romans 11:23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for Yah is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were **cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature**, and were

grafted contrary to nature **into a cultivated olive tree**, how much more will these, who are **natural branches**, be **grafted into their own olive tree**?²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this **mystery**, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the **fullness of the Gentiles** (melo hagoyim - מְלֵאֲדֵּי גוֹיִם) has come in.²⁶ And so **all Israel will be saved**, as it is written: "**The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Ya'acov**;

The **mystery Rav Sha'ul** speaks of in **Romans 11:25** is the **full return of Ephraim...** that is, the "**melo hagoyim**" of **Bereshith 48:19**:

Bereshith 48:19 But his father refused and said, "I know, my son, I know. He also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his (Ephraim's) descendants shall become a **multitude of nations** (melo hagoyim - מְלֵאֲדֵּי גוֹיִם)."

Ephraim's descendants, or those who make up the "**fullness of the Gentiles**", are referred to by **Yeshua** as "**the other sheep**":

John 10:16 "And **other sheep** I have which are **not of this fold**; **them also I must bring**, and they will hear My voice; and **there will be one flock** and one shepherd.

Continuing in **Ezekiel**, the prophet goes on to explain that the **children of Israel** would be taken **out from among the "nations"** to the "**land given to Ya'acov**" where they would become **one nation with "one king" and "one shepherd"**...it would be an "**everlasting covenant**" where He would be "**in their midst forever**"! Notice also, "**they shall never be divided into two kingdoms again**"!

Ezekiel 37:21 "Then say to them, 'Thus says Adonai יהוה: "Surely **I will take the children of Israel from among the nations**, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;²² "and **I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel**; and **one king shall be king over them all**; they shall no longer be two nations, **nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again**.²³ "They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their Elohim."²⁴ " **David My servant shall be king over them**, and they shall all have **one shepherd**; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them."²⁵ "Then they shall dwell in the **land that I have given to Ya'acov** My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.²⁶ "Moreover **I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them**; I will establish them and multiply them, and **I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore**.²⁷ "My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.²⁸ "The nations also will know that I, יהוה, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is **in their midst forevermore**." ' "

Verse 24 tells us that "**David My servant shall be king over them**." In **Acts** we understand **this king** to be **Yeshua the Messiah** who would **sit on David's throne**:

*Acts 2:29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch **David**, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.³⁰ "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that Yah had sworn with an oath to him that **of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Messiah to sit on his throne**,*

Yeshua said he came for the “*lost sheep of the house of Israel*”:

Matthew 15:24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Jeremiah speaks of repentance (“*with continual weeping*”) as the “*children of Israel*” and the “*children of Yehuda*” join “*together*”. “*His people*” are called “*lost sheep*” whose “*shepherds have led them astray*” by preaching false doctrines:

*Jeremiah 50:4 " In those days and in that time," says יהוה, "The children of Israel shall come, They and the children of Yehuda together; With continual weeping they shall come, And seek יהוה their Elohim.⁵ They shall ask the way to Zion, With their faces toward it, saying, 'Come and let us join ourselves to יהוה in a perpetual covenant That will not be forgotten.'⁶ " **My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have led them astray;** They have turned them away on the mountains. They have gone from mountain to hill; They have forgotten their resting place.*

The stories of **Ya’acov** being led out of Haran and **Israel** being led out of Egypt give us the pattern of how **redemption/restoration** is **destined to occur**, perhaps even in our own day. Something to **remember** is that in every case, it is יהוה who **decides when to end the exile**:

Bereshith 31:3 Then יהוה said to Ya’acov, "Return to the land of your fathers and to your family, and I will be with you."

*Shemot 3:16 "Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, ' יהוה Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Avraham, of Yitzchak, and of Ya’acov, **appeared to me**, saying, "I have surely visited you and seen what is done to you in Egypt;¹⁷ "and I have said **I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land** of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey." '*

If we **return** to the **prophecy in Jeremiah 50**, we notice that as a **future, repentant remnant** “*turns their faces towards Zion*”, these “*sheep*” will now receive the **instructions** to “*flee Babylon*” (**Ya’acov** was in Haran in **Babylon**):

*Jeremiah 50:4 ... **With continual weeping they shall come, And seek יהוה their Elohim.**⁵ They shall ask the way to Zion, With their faces toward it, saying, 'Come and let us join ourselves to יהוה In a perpetual covenant That will not be forgotten.'⁶ " **My people have been lost sheep.** ...⁸ " **Flee from the midst of Babylon,** Go out of the land of the Chaldeans...*

Thus the **pattern continues** and **sets in motion** an **end times scenario** that **includes** the same elements of **oppression, threats of decimation, murderous pursuit and Divine intervention**, which usher in the **final salvation of a united Israel**. This time the **spirit of Lavan/Pharaoh** will **manifest itself in hasatan** as he **pursues a certain group of people**:

Revelation 12:17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of Yah and have the testimony of Yeshua the Messiah.

Ezekiel continues on in his prophecy with the **battle of Gog and MaGog** (likely the **battle of Armageddon**), but notice **what happens after the war**:

Ezekiel 39:25 " Therefore thus says Adonai יהוה: 'Now I will bring back the captives of Ya'acov, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name --²⁶ 'after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they dwelt safely in their own land and no one made them afraid.²⁷ 'When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations,²⁸ 'then they shall know that I am יהוה their Elohim, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer.²⁹ 'And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says Adonai יהוה."

Baruch HaShem! What a wonderful plan!

Shabbat Shalom!

Ardelle