

This week's Audio, Video, and Teaching Notes are posted here.

The Pentateuch: A New Look – Jacob's Journeys – Class Nine (Jacob Flees Esau; Who Does Jacob Struggle With; Jacob Goes Back to the Land; The Field of Edom; Jacob's Bold Prayer; Jacob Wrestle with Someone; The Dawn Rises; What's the Name of the Angel of YHVH; Face to Face; Jacob Introduces His Handmaids, Leah, Rachel and the Kids to Esau; Jacob Finds Favor; Esau Goes to Seir; Jacob Goes to Shechem; Jacob Buys a Piece of Land from Hamor; Shechem and Dinah; Simeon and Levi – Weapons of Violence Are Their Swords; Arise and Go to Bethel; Bury Your Foreign Idols in Shechem; Bethlehem-Ephrath; Rachel Dies and Benjamin is Born; Jacob Arrives at Hebron; Isaac Dies; These are the Generations of Esau; The Horites are Displaced by Esau in Seir; Look at Joseph our New Firstborn)

November 20, 2021 – Ross Nichols

Torah Portion: VaYishlach: “And He Sent” – Genesis 32:4 – 36:43

Audio/Video Links:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/the-pentateuch-a-new-look-jacobs-journeys-class-nine/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdw5LWMKMWs>

Teaching Notes Link:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021.11.20-The-Pentateuch-A-New-Look-Jacobs-Journeys-Class-Nine.pdf>

TODAY'S INTRODUCTION

-Welcome to United Israel World Union, this is our Sabbath morning scripture study coming to you live from the United Israel Center in Saint Francisville, Louisiana. Thank you so much for joining us today. Many of you are in your own place today, alone, Shabbat Shalom and thank you for joining us this morning. We need one another to help us go through what the world is going through today. I pray that all of you and the ones that you care for remain healthy today and throughout the coronavirus.

-United Israel is pleased to announce a new teaching series for the Jewish calendar year 5782 (October 2021 – October 2022). The entire year will be dedicated to a careful study of the words of the Bible's first five books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) based upon an honest and objective new look at the Pentateuch. The materials for the weekly lessons will be arranged according to the annual cycle of readings.

-We're going to talk about some of the theological motifs and some of the things that inspire and move us to connect with God and the spiritual aspects of these texts. We'll also talk about some of the historical, critical, scholarly, and academic approaches to the text to help understand how this book came together. These are the most remarkable stories in all of history. So, how did we get these books and what makes them up?

-“Read the Bible as though it were something entirely unfamiliar, as though it had not been set before you ready – made... Face the book with a new attitude as something new... Let whatever may happen occur between yourself and it. You do not know which

of its sayings and images will overwhelm and mold you... But hold yourself open. Do not believe anything a priori; do not disbelieve anything a priori. Read aloud the words written in the book in front of you; hear the word you utter and let it reach you.” Everette Fox, *The Schocken Bible: Volume 1 – The Five Books of Moses*, New York – 1997.

TEACHING NOTES

-In a brief announcement today, I’ve decided that what the world really needs is a very good study bible. I’ve started by taking the text from the American Standard Version for Genesis, putting it into a document and beginning to go verse by verse and adding notes and commentary on a Pentateuch Project from Horeb Press, to be released one book at a time until all five are complete and released together in whole.

- Today, notice behind me there are a couple of maps where I’ll want your focus throughout today’s class. I’ll be identifying these places on the map as I work through, and I want you to think about direction. I want you to get into the story and follow Jacob.

-This week we are in our ninth class in our journey through the five books, *The Pentateuch – A New Look*. We are presently in one of these “these are the generation of” sections and this one is “these are the generations for Isaac” which began in Genesis 25:19 with Torah Portion Toledot and runs all the way through Genesis 35. This is where the focus shifts to two boys (twins) that are born through Rebekah. In Genesis 36:1 it begins the next section. Today I want to start with the way that the prophet Hosea remembers the stories that we’re covering now.

-Hos 12: 3 In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. 4 He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us-- 5 YHVH, the God of hosts, YHVH is his memorial name:

-Immediately you can see that we are talking about Jacob here. The two boys according to Genesis 25, Rebekah goes to seek YHVH over the boys that are battling in the womb and God tells her through a divine oracle that they are these two nations, two peoples. Jacob and Esau fought not only in the womb, but they strove against one another in life and enmity and jealousy ultimately drove them apart. Jacob is warned by his mother that Esau is going to kill him because of his anger over the birthright and the blessing. He flees at his mother’s advice / plan to a place called Aram-Naharaim, to a place where patriarchs and matriarchs are from, the home of his ancestors. He’s there for his safety, for his life and for a wife and it’s there that he meets his match, Uncle Laban. On the way he encounters angels with the ladder which reached from the ground to heaven. While he’s away Jacob is learning valuable life lessons. After he been there about 20 years he flees again and this time it’s with women and children.

-Hos 12: 12 Jacob fled to the land of Aram; there Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he guarded sheep.

-This is not talking about his flight to Aram, but his flight from Aram with a woman and with a woman noting the Hebrew parallelism and how Israel fled from Egypt. Jacob becomes a kind of underlying theme for understanding Hosea Chapter 12.

-Hos 12: 3 In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. 4 He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us--

-In his strength he strove with Elohim. It sounds like we have a confrontation between Jacob and God, and he strove with an angel / messenger, and he prevailed. He wept and sought his favor at Bethel, and there he found him and there he spoke with us. Is there something about Jacob's encounter at Bethel that has to do with us, meaning later generations? Is something that was spoken there meant to communicate down through the ages? Who is this that Jacob struggles / fights with? Is Jacob fighting God? This is what we will look at this morning. Is it an angel? Is it the malak? YHVH of Hosts? This is one of the strangest encounters, ever.

-Today we join Jacob and his family as they prepare to meet Esau. When he leaves, he's fleeing for his life, Esau wants to mourn his father, but even now he is still alive. He's now been told, go back to the land and he's worried that he has to meet once again with his brother, and he may still want to kill him.

-Gen 32: 3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother in the land of Seir, the country of Edom,

-Remember that Jacob keeps encountering these messengers. Are the messengers that Jacob sent people messengers or are they angels?

-Gen 32: 4 instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have sojourned with Laban and stayed until now. 5 I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male servants, and female servants. I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.'"

-Jacob sends these messengers (from northeast of the Dead Sea, east of the Jordan River / Jordan Rift, near the Wadi Jabbok) unto Seir, the field of Edom (south of the Dead Sea). This is not a point on the map, it's an area / region, and extends east and west of the north/south rift in the Aravah, the plains. In Hebrew it's not called the country of Edom, it's called the field of Edom and it only occurs in one other place.

-Jdg 5: 4 "YHVH, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens dropped, yes, the clouds dropped water. 5 The mountains quaked before YHVH, even Sinai before YHVH, the God of Israel.

-This region is a place of holiness where one might expect to have a divine encounter and that from this place, God would come. Jacob isn't expecting the arrival of God from the field of Edom, he's anxious about his brother to come from that region.

-Gen 32: 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and there are four hundred men with him." 7 Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. He divided the people who were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two camps, 8 thinking, "If Esau comes to the one camp and attacks it, then the camp that is left will escape." 9 And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O YHVH who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,' 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the deeds of steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I have become two camps. 11 Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children. 12 But you said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"

-These patriarchs called upon God and notice the way Jacob puts it, remember when you said to me, come back. There is a lot of boldness in these prayers. So, he sends gifts

ahead of him to appease his brother and lets him know that he comes in peace and bears much wealth that Esau might accept him and not kill him.

-Gen 32: 24 And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. 25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob 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 Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." 29 Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. 30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered." 31 The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

-We are going to talk about the struggle that takes place. Peniel is near the Wadi Jabbok northeast of the Dead Sea, and this is where this encounter takes place. The Hebrew word for wrestle is similar in meaning to kick up dust. The ground is hard and on top is dust which when two people are wrestling they are kicking up the dust. Another root word for wrestle in Hebrew means to intertwine or to embrace, they're locked up. Whoever Jacob is wrestling with says, let me go because the dawn rises. The phrase "the dawn rises" is used six times in the bible.

-Neh 4: 21 So we labored at the work, and half of them held the spears from the break of dawn until the stars came out.

-So, whoever Jacob is wrestling with says let me go at the same time the dawn is rising.

-Gen 32: 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob 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 Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." (This ties us back to Hosea 12 passage)

-Hos 12: 3 In the womb he took his brother by the heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. 4 He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and sought his favor. He met God at Bethel, and there God spoke with us--

-Gen 32: 29 Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him.

-This phrase, "Why is it that you ask my name" is only found in one other verse and may give us an idea as to who is speaking. Someone else in the bible was asked, what's your name and in that other place, this person used the exact same reply.

-Jdg 13: 18 And the angel of YHVH said to him, "Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?"

-It could be that this is the typical response of the malak of YHVH. We first met the malak of YHVH in the desert when they meet with Hagar. Does the malak of YHVH have a name? Jacob wants to know. In the Hebrew where it says, "seeing it is wonderful", it says, it's Pelai. His name is Pelai. In Isaiah 9 we have the birth of this child who is to come which is typically translated as wonderful, counselor, Mighty God,

everlasting father, Prince of Peace. In the Hebrew of Isaiah 9 it says, and you will call his name Pelai. Is there a connection, I don't know?

-Here we have the malak wrestling with Jacob. Who is this malak? In Hosea 12 you get this poetic description of the fight, he strove with Elohim and fought with the malak, then is says his name is YHVH of hosts. Dr. James taught a class on this.

-Who or What is the "Angel of the LORD" in the Hebrew Bible? (Mysteries in the Hebrew Bible; Abraham and the Oaks of Mamre; The Giving of the Sabbath; Forty Years in the Wilderness; Messengers Speak for the One That Sends Them; YHVH Speaks Third Person; Intrusion of Divine Speech; The Angel of YHVH; The Messenger, Namely the LORD; An Epiphany of YHVH Himself; Hagar's Two Encounters; Moses and the Burning Bush; I Came Down to Deliver Them; How do you Name the Nameless One; Manifestations of the Angel of YHVH; The Pillar of Cloud Presence; Moses Speaks Face to Face Inside the Tent; Gideon's Encounter; Manoah and His Wife's Encounter; The Nameless One – Elohim; God is Near – Tune in to the Force of All Forces)

August 7, 2021 – James Tabor

Audio/Video Links:

<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/who-or-what-is-the-angel-of-the-lord-in-the-hebrew-bible-dr-james-tabor/> &

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogwN5RA4EtM>

Teaching Notes Link: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2021.8.7-Who-or-What-is-the-Angel-of-the-LORD-in-the-Hebrew-Bible.pdf>

-Gen 32: 30 So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life has been delivered."

-Jacob believes that he's encountered a divine being. Some commentators say it's a dream, but it doesn't sound like a dream. A lot of time in the bible when it's a dream, it says it's a dream. This doesn't say it's a dream. It seems like its an actual encounter with a divine being. Here where it says, "face to face" is found five times in the bible. This is also found in Exodus 33:11 and Deuteronomy 34:10.

-Gen 32: 32 Therefore to this day the people of Israel do not eat the sinew of the thigh that is on the hip socket, because he touched the socket of Jacob's hip on the sinew of the thigh.

-In Genesis 33 Esau is on his way so Jacob divides his family, he has Leah with her children, and he's got Rachel with her children, and he's got the handmaids with their children. Jacob is in front of the girls and the kids and begins to walk forward and 400 people are coming towards you. As he's walking, he's bowing to the ground and does this 7 times as Esau approaches, and says, I'm your servant. Behind Jacob, the women and kids are in a certain order. This family is dysfunctional. If you're a handmaid and the kids, you're the first to get wacked if this thing goes bad. Do you know what that does to a family? Then behind the handmaids you have Leah and her kids. Then Rachel and Joseph are in the back. Everybody knows that Rachel and Joseph are Jacob's favorites.

-Gen 33: 3 He himself went on before them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. 4 But Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept.

-Just as the night before he embraces and intertwines with this malak named Pelai, here he embraces and intertwines with his brother. Esau falls on his neck, they kiss, they shed tears.

-Gen 33: 5 And when Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." 6 Then the servants drew near, they and their children, and bowed down. 7 Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down. And last Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down.

-Here we have this very touching scene where a procession of the women and children come up and they bow before Esau. Jacob introduces the handmaids and the kids, then he introduces Leah and the children, and then the last to be introduced were Joseph and Rachel. Esau then asks what is it about these gifts that you sent? I have plenty, I don't need your gifts. Jacob says, if I have found favor in your eyes, please accept it. Every day of my life, I want to find favor with man and God avoiding points of contention where possible. When Esau embraces Jacob, it reminds us of the fight that happened the night before and its not missed by Jacob.

-Gen 33: 10 Jacob said, "No, please, if I have found favor in your sight, then accept my present from my hand. For I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me.

-Just like he wrestled with the angel of YHVH the night before, so he embraces his brother and says, the face I say last night looks just like yours to me. He sees Esau as a divine messenger in a way and Esau brings a message of peace. He had every right to still be mad. Sometimes you can be right and not do right. Esau is touched by the family he meets and offers to leave some people with you, and we'll make sure that you get to Seir. Esau wants to help him get there and they'll all go together.

-Gen 33: 12 Then Esau said, "Let us journey on our way, and I will go ahead of you." 13 But Jacob said to him, "My lord knows that the children are frail, and that the nursing flocks and herds are a care to me. If they are driven hard for one day, all the flocks will die.

-The question is, does Jacob ever go to Seir? Esau leaves and goes to Seir.

-Gen 33: 16 So Esau returned that day on his way to Seir. 17 But Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built himself a house and made booths for his livestock. Therefore the name of the place is called Succoth. 18 And Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, on his way from Paddan-aram, and he camped before the city.

-From where Jacob and Esau met at Peniel, Esau went south to Seir and Jacob went west to Succoth and built a house and made booths for his livestock, yet Jacob is still east of the Jordan Rift. Then Jacob came in peace to Shechem further to the west on the other side of the Jordan Rift in the land of Canaan when he came from Paddan-aram and he camped before the city.

-Gen 33: 19 And from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, he bought for a hundred pieces of money the piece of land on which he had pitched his tent. 20 There he erected an altar and called it El-Elohe-Israel.

-At Shechem he buys a piece of land from a guy named Hamor and that's where the families at and this place becomes important later.

-Jos 24: 32 As for the bones of Joseph, which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt, they buried them at Shechem, in the piece of land that Jacob bought from the sons of

Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of money. It became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.

-At that time, we think that Joseph is a young person. They left Pannan-aram after the birth of Joseph is mentioned, so we don't know how old he is in Shechem, and Joseph will be here at Shechem because this is going to be his inheritance and the family lives there a little bit.

-In Genesis 34, Dinah is the daughter of Leah and Jacob, and it says that she goes out to see the daughters of the land and Shechem is the son of Hamor the Hivite. The Hivites are a group of Canaanite people that's mentioned 18 times. When Shechem sees Dinah he's smitten, and forces himself on her, he took her, and he lay with her. The text tells us that Shechem loves her, and he spoke tenderly to her heart. So, he asks his father to talk to the family because he wants to take Dinah as his woman. Meanwhile Jacob hears what's happened and he keeps silent until the boys return. Meanwhile the boys get word and they are grieved and angry and make their way back.

-Gen 34: 8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, "The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter. Please give her to him to be his wife. 9 Make marriages with us. Give your daughters to us, and take our daughters for yourselves. 10 You shall dwell with us, and the land shall be open to you. Dwell and trade in it, and get property in it." 11 Shechem also said to her father and to her brothers, "Let me find favor in your eyes, and whatever you say to me I will give. 12 Ask me for as great a bride-price and gift as you will, and I will give whatever you say to me. Only give me the young woman to be my wife." 13 The sons of Jacob answered Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because he had defiled their sister Dinah. Shechem and Hamor go back and talk to the people and the families there and say they can intermarry, and the men of the town accept it and they all circumcise themselves.

-Then Hamor addresses Jacob and the boys and presents a proposal, we'll intermarry your group and my group and you can dwell and trade here with the goal to be one people. We have a problem, you boys have to be circumcised and then we can be one people or if you don't do that, we'll take our daughter and go.

-Gen 34: 14 They said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one who is uncircumcised, for that would be a disgrace to us. 15 Only on this condition will we agree with you--that you will become as we are by every male among you being circumcised. 16 Then we will give our daughters to you, and we will take your daughters to ourselves, and we will dwell with you and become one people. 17 But if you will not listen to us and be circumcised, then we will take our daughter, and we will be gone." 18 Their words pleased Hamor and Hamor's son Shechem. 19 And the young man did not delay to do the thing, because he delighted in Jacob's daughter. Now he was the most honored of all his father's house. 20 So Hamor and his son Shechem came to the gate of their city and spoke to the men of their city, saying, 21 "These men are at peace with us; let them dwell in the land and trade in it, for behold, the land is large enough for them. Let us take their daughters as wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22 Only on this condition will the men agree to dwell with us to become one people--when every male among us is circumcised as they are circumcised. 23 Will not their livestock, their property and all their beasts be ours? Only let us agree with them, and they will dwell with us." 24 And all who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. 25 On the third day, when

they were sore, two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and came against the city while it felt secure and killed all the males. 26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house and went away. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain and plundered the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28 They took their flocks and their herds, their donkeys, and whatever was in the city and in the field. 29 All their wealth, all their little ones and their wives, all that was in the houses, they captured and plundered.

-A lot of people want to protect and defend what they did and that it was justified, but what did Jacob think? Jacob was hurt by what they did to his daughter

-Gen 34: 30 Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble on me by making me stink to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few, and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both I and my household."

-They are going to kill us boys. They destroyed the whole place and kidnapped all the children and took their women, and the boys said, should he deal with our sister as a harlot?

-Gen 49: 5 "Simeon and Levi are brothers; weapons of violence are their swords. 6 Let my soul come not into their council; O my glory, be not joined to their company. For in their anger they killed men, and in their willfulness they hamstringed oxen. 7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

-Genesis 49 says gather around me sons, and I'll tell you what will befall you in the latter days. What happens is exactly what Jacob says. After the massacre they have to get out of town. It just so happens that right after the massacre God says, Jacob you need to leave.

-Gen 35: 1 God said to Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there. Make an altar there to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau."

-Right after the massacre, God tells Jacob they need to go south to Bethel and says that this is where you were when you met God on your way out of the land. In Genesis 28 he's at Bethel, and he named it Bethel because it was there that he had the dream approximately 20 years earlier. So, we do know that Jacob is about to go to Bethel after the massacre in Shechem. But before they leave Shechem, Jacob says you've got to get the idols out. Remember that Rachel stole her father's idols, and they have these foreign gods. Get rid of your foreign gods and give me your earrings and while they are at Shechem they give them up. The idolatry piece of what they had in their baggage goes in a tree and they bury it right there.

-Gen 35: 5 And as they journeyed, a terror from God fell upon the cities that were around them, so that they did not pursue the sons of Jacob. 6 And Jacob came to Luz (that is, Bethel), which is in the land of Canaan, he and all the people who were with him, 7 and there he built an altar and called the place El-bethel, because there God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother.

-In the Hebrew where it says that God revealed himself to Jacob in Luz, this also means that God caused Jacob to be exiled from there. Speaking of prophetic glimpses, when they left Peniel by the Wadi Jabbok northeast of the Dead Sea, after Esau went south to Seir, Jacob went west back into the land of Canaan. Near the border they came to a place called Mahanaim (Genesis 32:2) which means the two camps. As a prophetic picture, as

Jacob prays, he says when I left this place with just my staff in my hand and now I've become two camps. This seems to point towards a prophetic picture.

-Sng 6: 13 Return, return, O Shulammitte, return, return, that we may look upon you. Why should you look upon the Shulammitte, as upon a dance before two armies (Mahanaim / two camps)?

-The returning one is called for in the four directions of the earth, return, return, return, return. The Shulammitte means the restored one. When the restored one comes back what's it going to look like, it's going to look like the story of Mahanaim / the two camps. It's also important in this same understanding that Israel needs to put those idols away. On their way south from Shechem to Bethel they get a strange notice. Rebekah's nurse, Deborah dies, and we don't get any mention of when Rebekah dies, but it does tell us she was buried.

-Gen 35: 9 God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Paddan-aram, and blessed him. 10 And God said to him, "Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name." So he called his name Israel. 11 And God said to him, "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body. 12 The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you." 13 Then God went up from him in the place where he had spoken with him. 14 And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he had spoken with him, a pillar of stone. He poured out a drink offering on it and poured oil on it. 15 So Jacob called the name of the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

-This sounds similar to the story in Genesis 32 when there was an encounter and a name change from Jacob to Israel. This is another story that tells us a similar story. Some have said, chronologically it's fine it's just happened again. It's also similar to Genesis 28 commemorating his departure where he sets up a pillar and anoints it and names it Bethel. The stories are similar, leading some to believe that these are two separate sources on how Jacob's name is changed to Israel. What's interesting is that Jacob is still called Jacob after his name is changed to Israel. Once they leave Bethel they continue south as they head next to Bethlehem.

-Gen 35: 16 Then they journeyed from Bethel. When they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel went into labor, and she had hard labor. 17 And when her labor was at its hardest, the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for you have another son." 18 And as her soul was departing (for she was dying), she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin. 19 So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), 20 and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day.

-The Hebrew letter Hey is sometimes placed on the end of a place name to indicate direction and was called the hey directive. On most maps, Ephrath and Bethlehem are very close together. Sometimes they are tied together like a town and a suburb, it's very specific, it's towards Ephrath.

-It's how the Gospel writer thinks that Micah 5 is a place even though Micah 5 says that it's talking about a family. It says, but you Bethlehem-Ephrath, you Bethlehem, towards Ephrath. Then it says you are small among the thousands of the clans of Judah. As we look at this, certain things make sense. It's interesting that in Micah 5 it does mention Bethlehem-Ephrath and it's talking about the birth of a child. When she who gives birth

will give birth again. The only person that's mentioned in context with any detail about being born at Bethlehem-Ephrath is the story we are about to talk about and that's Rachel. In my mind, Micah 5 ties together with this story in Genesis 35. The story of Jacob is found in Hosea, but it's also found in Micah.

-Gen 35: 19 So Rachel died, and she was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem), 20 and Jacob set up a pillar over her tomb. It is the pillar of Rachel's tomb, which is there to this day.

-They are on their way to Bethlehem and Rachel goes into hard labor and when she's in labor she names the son Ben-oni, but as her life passes, she dies, the father changes his name to Benjamin, the son of the right hand. Rachel has the child Benjamin near Bethlehem according to the text. As far as we know, all the other kids are born in Paddan-aram. But is this all that we have in the bible?

-It goes from bad to worse, they've fled from the incident at Shechem, Rachel dies, and now we find that Reuben has gone up and had sex with Rachel's handmaid Bilhah.

-Gen 35: 22 While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine. And Israel heard of it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve. 23 The sons of Leah: Reuben (Jacob's firstborn), Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. 24 The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin. 25 The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's servant: Dan and Naphtali. 26 The sons of Zilpah, Leah's servant: Gad and Asher. These were the sons of Jacob who were born to him in Paddan-aram.

-Notice that the list of children says that all of them were born in Paddan-aram and includes Benjamin. Is Benjamin born in Paddan-aram or is Benjamin born in Bethlehem on the way to Ephrath? We have to pay attention to these details because they'll come back into our story. Jacob and the family bury Rachel and put her in a grave that's indicated as such, unto this day which tells us that that part of the story is later. Then they're continuing south towards Hebron.

-Gen 35: 27 And Jacob came to his father Isaac at Mamre, or Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron), where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned. 28 Now the days of Isaac were 180 years. 29 And Isaac breathed his last, and he died and was gathered to his people, old and full of days. And his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

-When Jacob arrived at Hebron, he at last was able to see his father and from what we can tell, this is the first time he's seen his father since he fled more than 20 years ago. His mother is already dead, he sees his father and his father dies. Then Jacob and Esau come together to the burial. Does Esau come from Seir up to Hebron for the burial? Genesis 36 begins a new story within the story, these are the generations of Esau.

-Gen 36: 6 Then Esau took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household, his livestock, all his beasts, and all his property that he had acquired in the land of Canaan. He went into a land away from his brother Jacob. 7 For their possessions were too great for them to dwell together. The land of their sojournings could not support them because of their livestock. 8 So Esau settled in the hill country of Seir. (Esau is Edom.)

-Here we have to decide was Esau dwelling in Edom and Seir prior or at what point it seems that the two brothers have grown together. This sounds very similar to the story of Abraham when he and Lot separated. Their cattle and their livestock and their things became so great. Here in the story of Genesis 36 Esau says he has to go away because there is not enough room for both of them, he leaves and goes to Seir. Genesis 36 goes at

length to cover Esau and the editor and compiler is writing the history later, telling us from a source text some things that we missed if we just read the text quickly and don't pay attention. Geography and Esau's family merge in these texts, such that one doesn't know without careful study if the people names led to the place names or if the place names led to the people names.

-Gen 36: 9 These are the generations of Esau the father of the Edomites in the hill country of Seir.

-Gen 36: 11 The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. 12 (Timna was a concubine of Eliphaz, Esau's son; she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.) These are the sons of Adah, Esau's wife. 15 These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau: the chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, 17 These are the sons of Reuel, Esau's son: the chiefs Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah; these are the chiefs of Reuel in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Basemath, Esau's wife.

-Teman is one of these southern regions where God is coming from. In Timna there were a lot of copper mines and the Edomites are very strong in this area. Verse 17 mentions the land of Edom.

-Gen 36: 20 These are the sons of Seir the Horite, the inhabitants of the land: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21 Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan; these are the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir in the land of Edom.

-We get this idea that there's this group people called the Horites who are living in this region of Seir and Edom. Are they related to Esau? A lot of people think that they are, but they are not.

-Deu 2: 12 The Horites also lived in Seir formerly, but the people of Esau dispossessed them and destroyed them from before them and settled in their place, as Israel did to the land of their possession, which YHVH gave to them.) 22 as he did for the people of Esau, who live in Seir, when he destroyed the Horites before them and they dispossessed them and settled in their place even to this day.

-What we know is that there is a group of Horites who are living in Seir south of the Dead Sea. We know that Esau, when he splits from Jacob after he is back in the land and Esau goes into the land of Edom and Seir and wipes out the Horites. Genesis 14:6 mentions this group as well. Once you get down to Genesis 36:31 we get to a list of kings in Edom before Israel had a king. This was written at a time when Israel did have kings.

-By the close of this week's Torah portion, Rachel is dead, Isaac is dead, the boys (Jacob and Esau) have been reconciled but then they split up just like Abraham and Lot did because the land couldn't support both of them. Reuben has slept with Bilhah, Rachel's handmade which was on the hands of Simeon and Levi doing the massacre at Shechem.

-Reuben was the firstborn, he's out. Simeon and Levi are cruel and hateful, they're out in terms of the firstborn. The writer wants us to know which of the brothers are disqualified to be the firstborn. Who's next? We need a firstborn. Our focus now goes to the next rightful firstborn, a boy named Joseph. The firstborn of Jacob's beloved Rachel.

-1Chr 5: 1 The sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's couch, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel, so that he could not be enrolled as the oldest son;

-The genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. All our focus shifts to Joseph.

-Gen 37: 1 Jacob lived in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan. 2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was pasturing the

flock with his brothers. He was a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives. And Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father.

-These are the generations of Jacob, is the next story within the story but it's not about Jacob as much as its about where the scribe wants to bring us next. Next week we follow our ancient scribe's lead, to the new firstborn, the one who now holds that position, to Joseph.

Shabbat Shalom, Shavua Tov, Have a great week!

THIS WEEK IN TORAH

NOVEMBER 20, 2021

This week's Torah Portion VaYishlach: "And He Sent" (Genesis 32:4 – 36:43) Esau advances to attack Jacob; Jacob fears Esau; Military preparations; Jacob's prayer; Jacob's tribute for Esau; The struggle with the angel; Jacob wrestles with God, The prohibition of eating the tendon of an animal's thigh; Jacob meets Esau - the encounter/ parting; Jacob arrives in Shechem; Dinah's abduction and defiling; Jacob's family learns of the outrage; The deception; Simeon and Levi decimate Shechem; Jacob journeys to Bethel; The deaths of Rebecca and Deborah; God blesses and renames Jacob; The birth of Benjamin and the death of Rachel; Reuben's error and partial vindication; Jacob and Isaac are reunited; Isaac's death; The chronicles of Esau; Esau separates himself from Jacob; Esau's descendants; The Seirite genealogy; The Edomite kings. "Shavua Tov" and Have a Great Week!

"This Week in Torah" FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/571648826269105/>

Portion 29 – The Return of Jacob – Part 2 – Genesis 32:3-33:17 (Weaving together – Past Present and Future; Wrestling with God; Dividing the Camp – Mahanaim – Twin Camps; Jacob's Prayer; Giving Credit to God – A Staff becomes Two Camps; Jacob faces his past; Face to Face; Jacob blesses Esau; The Restoration and Dance of the Twin Camps)

July 22, 2017 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/return-jacob-part-two-genesis-323-3317/>

Teaching Notes: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/united-israel/teaching-notes-portion-29-the-return-of-jacob-part-2-genesis-323-3317-20170722/358496751235352/>

Portion 30 – Jacob in Shechem – Genesis 33:18 – 35:8 (Jacob's Return; Return and Hold Fast to Love and Justice and Wait for God; Be a Blessing to all the Families of the Earth; Bethel – The House of God; Return to Me and I will Return to You; Bethel and Luz; Idols in the Camp; Don't Make Excuses for God's People when they sin; Grab Hold of the Covenant)

August 5, 2017 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Link: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/jacob-shechem-genesis-3318-358/>

Teaching Notes: <https://www.facebook.com/notes/united-israel/teaching-notes-portion-30-jacob-in-shechem-genesis-3318-358-20170805/389073308177696/>

Portion 31 – Born in Bethlehem – Genesis 35:9 – 36:43 (Israel will be a Blessing to all the earth; Bethel – The House of God; Jacob Returns to the Land and Brings Gifts; Jacob Anoints a Pillar; An Anointing in Bethlehem; Benjamin is born – the Son of my Right Hand; Jacob puts away his families idols; Rachel is Gone, Joseph’s Dreams; Jeremiah 31 vs. Matthew 2; The Prophetic Restoration of Israel; Rachel’s Children are Coming Back)

August 26, 2017 – Ross Nichols

Audio/Video Link: <https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/born-bethlehem-genesis-359-3643/>

Teaching Notes:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unitedisraelworldunion/permalink/391473851270975/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

-Blossoming Rose Israel Tours (2022): <https://blossomingrose.org/>

-Walking the Ancient Paths – (2022): Tabor – Nichols Israel Tour March 4-15, 2022;
<https://unitedisraelworldunion.com/israel-tours/>; <https://blossomingrose.org/2022-walking-the-ancient-paths/>

-UNCC Mt. Zion Archaeological Project, Dig Mt. Zion (2022): June/July 2022;

<https://digmountzion.uncc.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/digmountzion/>

-Accessible Adventure Israel Tour – (2022): Nichols – Young; October 17 – 27, 2022;
<https://blossomingrose.org/accessible-adventure-israel-tour-2022/>

& <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyUGXC4fUvU> -