



Vayeytzai

(and departed)

B'reshit [Genesis] 28:10-32:3

In English Bibles – Genesis 28:10-32:2

And Ya'aqov Departed

B'reshit [Genesis] 28:10-12

10 And Ya'aqov [Jacob] departed from Be'er Sheva, and went toward Haran.

11 And he came to a certain place, and stayed there all night, because the sun was set. And he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And he dreamed. And behold, a staircase erected on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the messengers of Elohim ascending and descending on it.

After Yitzchak sent Ya'aqov away to the relatives of Rivkah his wife, Ya'aqov seems to have left right away (B'reshit 28:5). One of the stops that Ya'aqov made between Be'er Sheva and where he was going was this place, which he was later to name Beth El.

It was getting dark, so Ya'aqov stopped for the night. He must have been traveling rather lightly, for it seems that he had nothing with him to use for a pillow. To take a stone and use that for a pillow seems to indicate that he may have been rather destitute of material possessions. I can think of a lot of things to use for a pillow that would be more comfortable than a stone. This seems to indicate that Ya'aqov may have left in rather a hurry to get away from his brother.

While he slept, he had a dream. In this dream he saw the messengers of Elohim going up into heaven on a staircase (or ladder), and other messengers of Elohim coming down to earth from heaven on that same staircase.

This was an important event in Ya'aqov's life. He had just struck out on his own, and one of his first encounters was with Elohim.

The Covenant

B'reshit [Genesis] 28:13-15

13 And, behold, YHWH stood above it, and said, "I am YHWH, the Elohim of Avraham your father, and the Elohim of Yitzchak. The land where you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed.

14 And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall spread out to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And, behold, I am with you, and will keep you, where ever you go, and will bring you again into this land, for I will not leave you, until I have done that which I have spoken of to you."

YHWH made a covenant with Avraham and passed that covenant on to Yitzchak, the son of Avraham. Now YHWH is passing that same covenant on to Ya'aqov, the son of Yitzchak.

YHWH split the seed of Avraham between Yishmael and Yitzchak. Yitzchak received the birthright and the blessing; and Yishmael, Avraham's firstborn son, did not. Avraham did this according to YHWH's instructions.

YHWH then further divided the seed of Avraham (through Yitzchak) between Esau and Ya'aqov, the sons of Yitzchak. Ya'aqov received the birthright and the blessing; and Esau, the firstborn, did not receive it. This was according to the instructions of YHWH, for He foreknew that Esau would despise his inheritance.

YHWH now promises to watch over and keep Ya'aqov and bring him again into this Land.

The Fear of Elohim

B'reshit [Genesis] 28:16-17

16 And Ya'aqov [Jacob] awakened out of his sleep, and he said, "Surely YHWH is in this place. And I knew it not."

17 And he was afraid, and said, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of Elohim, and this is the gate of heaven."

One of the things that seems to have been lost in our culture and in our modern society today is the fear of Elohim. Very few today seem to have much respect for others or their property, let alone a respect (fear) for Elohim.

When there is no fear of Elohim the people simply demand things of Elohim like He is some genie in a bottle. People run to and fro today, and basically only even pray to Elohim when they are in trouble or they want something. We should be ashamed! We should seek to regain our fear of Elohim!

We should learn to come into His presence and be there just for the privilege of being in the presence of the Creator of heaven and earth. When we come into His presence we should listen to what He has to say to us. We should listen to His instructions to us.

If we are the ones who are always doing the talking, how are we going to know what it is that He wants us to do? If we are going to be the Army of the Living El, then we need to start acting like good soldiers and come into His presence and say, "Reporting for duty, Master!" And then we need to listen for His instructions. Then, of course, we need to obey His instructions.

Ya'aqov certainly understood what it meant to fear Elohim. May we all be found to be the sons (and daughters) of Ya'aqov and also fear our Elohim in the proper way.

Ya'aqov's Vow

B'reshit [Genesis] 28:18-22

18 And Ya'aqov [Jacob] rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called the name of that place Beth El. But the name of the city was Luz at the first.

20 And Ya'aqov [Jacob] vowed a vow, saying, "If Elohim will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

21 so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and YHWH will be my Elohim,

22 then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be Elohim's house. And of all that You shall give me I will surely give the tenth to You."

It seems that what Ya'aqov was saying, in essence, was that he wanted to know if the Elohim of his fathers Avraham and Yitzchak was real. If their Elohim would show Himself to him, then he, Ya'aqov would make YHWH his Elohim just like his fathers did before him.

There comes a point in each of our lives when we are no longer saying "your Elohim", but rather we come into a personal relationship with the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and once we do that, then, He is now "my Elohim". This is the journey (process) that Ya'aqov was setting out upon. However, we also need to understand that not only is this a process, but that at some time during this process we need to make a decision. This decision is the turning point of the process. Before that time the Creator was not our personal Elohim, but then after we make this decision He has become our personal Elohim! However, this decision does not end the process. Rather, the process then takes on a different emphasis, more one of refinement.

Let us take note of the following passage.

Mattithyah [Matthew] 6:33

“But seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Please note that Yeshua is telling us that if we seek YHWH’s Kingdom first, then something will be added to us. But what will be added? Let us back up a few verses and see what will be added.

Mattithyah [Matthew] 6:25

25 “Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment?”

When we read this passage it strongly reminds us of the vow that Ya’aqov made. Then there are also these passages from Yeshua’s Sermon on the Mount.

Mattithyah [Matthew] 7:13-14

“Enter ye in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby.

14 For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leads unto life, and few are they that find it.”

Mattithyah [Matthew] 7:21

“Not everyone that says unto Me, Master, Master, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father who is in heaven.”

Now let’s compare.

Ya’aqov’s Vow	Yeshua’s Teaching
Keep in the way	Narrow way
Bread to eat	Food to eat
Clothing to wear	Clothing to wear
Come to father’s house again	Enter Kingdom of Heaven

Ya’aqov sought to know for sure that YHWH was the proper Elohim to serve. He wanted to know if He was worthy of His worship. So he made this vow. In essence, Ya’aqov said that if YHWH would provide for all his needs, then he would serve Him.

Likewise, Yeshua said that when we serve YHWH by faith and seek His Kingdom first in our lives, then YHWH, the Elohim of the Universe, will make sure that what we truly have need of, He will provide. This thing called faith that we are to exercise in following our Elohim is something that we would do well to have a good understanding of.

Faith

What is faith? How does YHWH expect us to live by this thing called faith? The answers to these questions (and others like them) will in large part determine what one's life will be like.

One good working definition of faith that this writer especially likes is:

"Faith is the capacity to believe that YHWH will do as He says, and to act upon that belief."

In this it can easily be seen that faith is two-fold. One is believing with the mind, the mental assent. However, this must be joined with appropriate action on the part of the one believing.

Scripture says that even the demons of hell believe and shudder that Yeshua is the Son of YHWH (James 2:19), but this knowledge does not affect their actions, they still act like demons. This knowledge will never be enough for them to have eternal life. One's belief in Yeshua, the Son of YHWH, must result in right action, right living for it to have any good eternal benefit.

Ya'aqov [James] 2:17, 20, 22, 26

17 Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself.

20 But wilt thou know, vain man, that faith apart from works is barren?

22 Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect;

26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

YHWH is an Elohim who loves and cares for His creation, especially those who believe upon His Son, Yeshua. So much so, that He will shake them out of their comfortable little lives at times to remind them Who it is that they must be dependent upon for all of life's necessities.

It is quite easy for one in his humanness to depend upon the seen rather than the unseen. This seems to take the form of material possessions more than anything else; e.g., one's bank account. When you are about to make a purchase, where do you go first for guidance? To your bank account to see if you have enough to make the purchase? If that is the case, then I submit to you that your money is your god. For if that is one's normal action, where is the trust and dependence upon an Omnipotent, Omniscient, Ever-Present Elohim? Who is it that really controls your life? Who is it that really controls your purse strings?

The determining factor in any given situation should not be, "Can I afford it?" But rather, "Is this YHWH's will for me at this time?" It is quite evident from Scripture that YHWH regularly leads His people to do things that are beyond their abilities. They could not afford it! If you are never doing things that are beyond your abilities, then you are not living by faith. And anything that is not by faith is sin

(Romans 14:23). Please do not hear me saying that one should run up their credit card debt. That is not what I am purporting here at all. Rather, what we should be doing is listening to hear His Voice and then simply obeying Him. This is the only sure way of doing what is right in each and every situation.

Does this seem harsh or unrealistic? YHWH simply wants our undivided dependence upon Him for everything. This is where true worship springs from, by faith.

Look at the children of Israel as YHWH was leading them out of the land of Egypt. Did not YHWH Himself, in the fire by night and the cloud by day, lead them into a completely humanly hopeless and impossible situation with the Red Sea in front, the mountains on both sides, and Pharaoh and his army behind? YHWH still does this in the lives of those who would serve Him. He does this so that He can be glorified and honored and worshipped. He does this so His people will know Who He is, and depend completely upon His strength, mercy and grace, not upon their own paltry and meager abilities.

Scripture teaches that if one seeks first YHWH's kingdom and His righteousness then He will provide all the necessities of life: clothes, shelter, and food (Matthew 6:33, quoted above). Do I really believe what Yeshua says in this instance? Or do I just give Him lip service?

Where does your job fit into all this? Doesn't the Scripture teach that if a man does not work, neither let him eat? Yes it does.

2 Thessalonians 3:10

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, if any will not work, neither let him eat.

But the question is, "Why are you there? To earn a living?" If that is your answer you missed it. You are not serving YHWH with a whole heart. You are double-minded, and unstable in His kingdom.

You should be there because that is His will for you and that is where He wants you to be a witness for Him. In YHWH's kingdom that is the primary duty of the believer, to walk in obedient love to the guidance of the Set-apart Spirit. As such we must acknowledge that we are all called to be witnesses. The truth is that we ARE all witnesses, either for YHWH or against YHWH.

Which kind of witness are you?

Am I of the mindset that I earn my daily sustenance? Scripture teaches that every good and perfect gift is from our Father above .

Ya'aqov [James] 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.

Do I act as though this is true? Or do I depend upon myself? If the latter, I am taking glory for myself that is due to YHWH alone.

YHWH gave us the ability to work so we would be out amongst the people of the world as an opportunity to witness for Him. It just so happens that He has chosen in some cases to have those whom we have been sent to witness to, to pay us for doing His business.

While we are at work, we must realize that YHWH expects us to do the very best that we can, as if we were working for YHWH Himself; for in reality, we are. All the while, we should give YHWH all the honor and glory.

Colossians 3:23

whatsoever you do, work heartily, as unto the Master, and not unto men;

Please note that you yourself are a man, therefore you are not to work unto yourself as well.

Is it not YHWH that has given us the talents and abilities we have? Is it not YHWH Who has given us a good mind to be able to learn and teach and do?

Qorintyah Aleph [1st Corinthians] 4:7

Brother, what do you have that you have not received? And if you have received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

When was the last time that you said that you were proud of your job? Or said that you were proud of your education? Or said that you were proud of your house? Or when was the last time you said you were proud of your children? Do you not realize that these things are a blessing from the Almighty? And, do you realize that when you boast about something, that you are robbing YHWH?

When you get into an uncomfortable place in life, do you try to ease the discomfort in any way possible? Do you look for the shortest route back to your life of ease? What of YHWH's will? Perhaps YHWH has placed us in that position because He has not been able to get our attention.

YHWH wants us to learn of Him and His ways, the way of faith and trust and complete dependence upon Him. He does not want us to try to do things in our own power or strength. YHWH has a purpose in having us in that tough place. Don't squirm out of the difficulty, or you will not be able to learn that which YHWH is trying to teach you; and as a result of that, you will have to go through similar circumstances again and again and again, until you finally submit to His Kingship in all areas of your life, and ask Him what it is He is trying to teach you.

One of those things that He is trying to teach you (and there usually will be more than one), will have to do with living by faith, and trusting Him.

1st Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is YHWH's will for you in Mashiach Yeshua.

This can be a pretty tall order to accomplish on a daily basis. Read that passage again. Memorize it, and let it become a part of who you are in Mashiach.

“Rejoicing always” speaks of a life of worship. “Pray without ceasing” speaks of a constant companionship and communion with YHWH. “In everything give thanks” speaks of an attitude and acknowledgement we have received everything we have from YHWH; and we have nothing that we have not received from YHWH.

Here Shaul says "in everything" give thanks; however, in Ephesians 5:20 he says that we are to give thanks "for everything". It is much more difficult to do that; and in fact, only when a person walks in the Spirit day by day, moment by moment, is it even possible.

Where is your faith at today?

ABBA YHWH, open our eyes so that we may see that the decisions that we make and the way that we live our everyday lives either glorifies You or it glorifies ourselves. Please give us Your strength to change our lives in each and every area that we need to change, so that our whole life brings glory and honor to You and You alone; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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