

Torah Portion Vayishlach
Genesis 32:4 (3)-36:43

Vayishlach means “and he sent”.

In 32:22-32 we find that Jacob wrestles with God. Here Yahweh changes his name from Jacob to Israel, meaning *Prince with God or Commanding Power with God*.

Older versions of English Bibles seem to translate the Hebrew better. Young's Literal Translation has for verse 28: “And he saith, `Thy name is no more called Jacob, but Israel; for thou hast been a prince with God and with men, and dost prevail.” The KJV translates it about the same.

Here we find that Jacob wrestles with an angel who is no ordinary angel. It appears that Yahweh has appeared in physical form as Jacob says later that he has seen God face to face.

Jacob refuses to give up the fight. He will not let go of this heavenly visitor until he gets what he wants from Him. What did he want? A blessing! He did not want riches, he wanted a blessing!

Blessings had been spoken over him by his grandfather, Abraham, and his father, Isaac, but Jacob wanted a blessing from God.

The blessing comes in a way that will change Jacob's life forever. His hip is thrown out of its socket. Jacob's walk, physically and spiritually, will be changed forever. Ancient Jewish literature records that Jacob walked with a limp for the rest of his life.

Jacob's persistence paid off with Elohim. Not only did he receive the blessing that he sought, but Yahweh promises him that he will prevail with man.

Jacob's whole life had been a struggle. He had to struggle in the womb with his brother Esau. There are Hebrew teachers who believe that the reason that Jacob had hold of Esau's heel was because he was trying to keep him from crushing his head with his heel. (Going back to the prophecy in Genesis) Likewise, Jacob struggled over his birthright and for his wives. But here, Yahweh promises in His blessing of Israel that “he shall prevail”. Just as he held on to God until he received his blessing, Jacob will prevail in all of his struggles with mankind. This blessing flowed right down to his descendants.

The Israelites have had to struggle with mankind for survival for centuries. They have been hunted down, pierced through, burned out, sold out, driven out and mocked all over the world. But this promise to Jacob will not fail. HE SHALL PREVAIL! In all of his struggles; Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Rome and even to this day, they are still “the apple of His eye”. Dispute it if you will, but ISRAEL will PREVAIL!

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