

Rewards in Obedience

¹⁹and Jacob named the place Beth-El; but the town had originally been called Luz (light, Spanish). ²⁰Jacob took this vow: 'If God will be with me and will guard (shomer) me on this road that I am traveling, giving me bread (lechem) to eat and clothes to wear, ²¹so that I return to my father's house in peace, then Adonai will be my God; ²²and this stone, which I have set up as a standing-stone, will be God's house; and of everything you give me, I will faithfully return one-tenth (a tithe) to you" (Gen. 27:46; 28:4, 19-22 CJB).

In last week's *Parasha (Tol'dot) Esau* disregarded his parent's admonition about marrying "Hitti" women. *Esau* was concerned only with himself and with those things that brought him personal satisfaction – one more Biblical example of children indulging in what the world has to offer using the resources (at the expense) of the parents! This is a reminder of **what the parents allow in moderation, children excuse in excess!** But here we see how easily *Isaac* is persuaded to send *Jacob* away – and not because he dislikes his son. *Isaac* is old, but he is not in his death bed yet. In fact, he will live many more years. What parent would send away one of his sons in his later years? But the mere thought of potentially more of the same behavior from *Jacob* as from *Esau* would not only kill *Rebecca* but also ultimately kill *Isaac*. However, *Jacob* is prepared to obey immediately. What reward does this immediate obedience bring? The answer is that it will result in the favor and blessing of *Adonai*!

Consider the blessing in detail: "*May El Shaddai (The Almighty) bless you.*" This immediately reveals a *God* that can do everything – nothing is impossible with Him. Then, "*(May He) make you fruitful and increase your descendants.*" *Jacob* will have many male children. He doesn't even yet have a wife! "...until they become a whole congregation (assembly) of peoples." His offspring will become diversified people. "*And may he give you the blessing which he gave Avraham, you and your descendants with you, so that you will possess the land you will travel through, the land God gave to Avraham.*" *Jacob* receives the Abrahamic blessing – destined to be the father of many nations and possess the land of Israel. Scripture tells us that when *Esau* saw that *Jacob* "*obeyed his father and mother*" (vv. 7) he misinterpreted the matter and took himself another wife from the daughters of Ishmael. But the correct interpretation is to obey parents first, not after doing things your own way first. "*Honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land which Adonai your God is giving you.*" Or "*Children, what you should do in union with Adonai is obey your parents, for this is right.*" "*"Honor your father and mother" - this is the first commandment that embodies a promise - so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the Land*" (Ex. 20:12 & Eph. 6:1-3). In today's *portion* we see that *God's* blessing is Yes and Amen! *Jacob* is probably sad having to leave everything that means anything to him – home, parents, friends, comfort. But when he sees *Rachel*, it is all forgotten. *Jacob's* obedience to his parents brings none other than his beloved *Rachel*, a large family and prosperity. *God* gave him everything as prophesied in his father's blessing. I believe the same is true today – sons and daughters reap great promises and blessings by the simple act of obedience to their parent's *righteous* instructions.

A great reward in obedience is a fulfilled and prosperous life with a companion from the Lord by your side and many children to enjoy the blessing with. But it does not end there – it becomes the conduit for *God* to work out His everlasting plan with you as His instrument. Almost everything *Jacob* does from this point forward becomes prophetic. And it all seemed like a *few days* to *Jacob*! Even double or nothing for *Rachel* was worth it!

Our Father Abraham sowed iniquity with respect to lying and deceiving – could *Adonai* (whom Abraham knew could raise the dead) not also protect *Sarah* from Pharaoh and *Abimelech*? Is there ever a need to lie and deceive? Was it necessary for *Isaac*, exactly like his father, to lie about *Rebecca* his wife? Was it necessary for *Jacob* to lie and deceive *Isaac* in his old age? Do we serve a wimpy *God* who cannot deliver our loved ones or cannot keep His promise to us? Unbelief is the basis of the deceiver's (Satan) plan for us. Since "*without faith(trusting) it is impossible to please God*" (*Hebrews 11:6*) Satan prompts us to disguise our trust – to doubt *God*. We are driven to act on our fears that *God* is not able, that *God* does not care, that *God* does not deliver on His promises. We erroneously believe that nothing is going to happen unless we intervene. And so, we fall to our unbelief (trust), and displease Him. In the process, we are responsible for altering the roads of life. We will ultimately accomplish His Will for us if we submit to His Sovereignty, but do we suffer consequences! Could the 12 sons of Israel not

be born of Rachel, instead of from 4 different women? Did our father Jacob suffer for his fraud? Will we not also suffer if we get involved in knavery? Will God not bring about what He has promised if we obey the righteous will of our parents?

In the carrying out of his parent's wishes, *Jacob* comes to "*The Place*" (*hamakom*). And because the sun is setting, he rests there. Where is "*The Place*?" Without knowing it, *Jacob* is in none other than *Mt. Moriah* – the very place where his father laid himself on an altar made of stones and was delivered. He takes from the stones that many years earlier had witnessed the *Akeidah* and lays on them! Do you see that *Jacob* is laying on the same place and stones that His father laid? What does he receive? A dream – not just a dream but a revelation of the House of God, *Beth-El*. So, he builds up a monument (stone memorial) and "*pours oil on it.*" This is the first anointing in *the Bible* – the anointing of the Temple Mount, the House of God. In Genesis 31:13 *Adonai* uses the word *mashach* to describe *Jacob's* act. This simple rite of pouring out oil over the head of the stone will ultimately culminate in the promise of the *Anointed One*, the *Mashiac*.

The text also tells us that *Adonai* is near *Jacob*. He assures him that He is with him. He reiterates the promises that He had made to his father and grandfather and assures him that He is on the scene until it is all accomplished. *Adonai* will *shomer* us, do we trust Him to do so? "¹⁵ *Behold, I am with you, and I will watch (shomer) over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not forsake you until I have done what I promised you*" (*Gen. 28:15*).

The Almighty's Will is not hidden from us – we do not have to guess anymore about what He wants for our lives. He wants us to *sh'ma*, that is, He wants us to prove that we heard His Word by our actions. This is simply called obedience. Our ancestors said "*Na-aseh V'Nishma*" (see Ex. 19:8 and 24:3) – "*all the words Adonai has spoken, we will do and we will obey.*" Unlike our forefathers who were hearing His Words for the first time, we have an advantage – we have His written Word and His *Torah*. So, we need not be deceived anymore – we can live our life according to His Will. Young people, these are not my words, and these are not your parent's words, these are *Adonai's* Words! Scripture has given us the benefit of having an absolutely reliable roadmap for our lives – will you sow righteousness and reap a great reward?

Scripture tells us about the cyclic nature of life. *Solomon*, the wisest human to ever live, tells us: "¹⁴ *I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.* ¹⁵ *That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past*" (*Eccl 3:14-16*). Can we not break the cycle of iniquity that plagues our generation? *Yeshua* said: "*Because you have such little trust! Yes! I tell you that if you have trust as tiny as a mustard seed, you will be able to say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there!' and it will move; indeed, nothing will be impossible for you!*" (cf. *Jer. 32:17*) and again He repeated: "*Humanly, this is impossible; but with God everything is possible.*" (see *Matt. 19:26*). *Mary* was told in *Luke 1:37*: "*For with God, nothing is impossible.*" And again, in *Luke 18:27*: "*What is impossible humanly is possible with God.*" Do you get the picture? We can! You can! I can! Say it with me:

"I have overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, by the words of my testimony about that Blood and because I love not my life unto the death." (Rev. 12:11) I can do all things through Yeshua who strengthens me! (Phil. 4:13)

It is time to break the cycle of consequences that plague our walk with the Lord. There is great reward awaiting us if we sow precious seeds. Scripture tell us: "⁵ *Those who sow in tears will reap with a song of joy.* ⁶ *Whoever keeps going out weeping, carrying his bag of seed, will surely come back with a song of joy, carrying his sheaves*" (see *Ps 126:5-6*) We can, with His Spirit by our side and with His strength change the course of history. I challenge us to rise and become the generation of over-comers. We are that generation by faith. Will you join me and the thousands of our people at Mt. Sinai and reaffirm to Him *Na-aseh V'Nishma* – **We will do and we will obey...**