

## Wrestle (Struggle) for the Blessing of Yah

There is a part of Jacob's character we totally admire: Jacob values the blessing of *Yah* and was willing to wrestle for it. Afterwards his name is changed to Israel: *"Your name will no longer be Jacob, but rather Israel, for you have struggled with God and with men, and you have overcome"* (Gen. 32:29). Henceforth the People of *Yah* are identified by his name (the Children of Israel) – we are grafted in to those who are willing to wrestle with Him. We are the children of *Holy Chutzpah!*

In today's *Parshah* we read that Jacob blessed his son Joseph's two sons and said, *"Then he blessed them that day saying, 'In you (Joseph's sons) shall (the Nation of) Israel bless (their male children) by saying: 'May Adonai make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh.' Thus Yah put Ephraim before Manasseh" (Gen. 48:20).* But we observe that Ephraim and Manasseh are different. There is *no record of sibling rivalry* in the text. This is a break from the cycle of brother against brother (e.g., between Jacob & Esau and between the children of Leah and Rachel), which demonstrates humility, harmony, and preferring others to ourselves. Every week at our *Erev Shabbat* tables we bless the sons in our families with this very blessing, as Jacob instructed us to do. When we bless our children with this blessing, we are proclaiming a break in the cycle of *contention between brothers*. We are declaring a *vision of shalom* among natural and spiritual brothers and sisters, the fullness of which comes through the prince of shalom, *Yeshua our Messiah*. As Jacob lies dying, he confers the *value of blessing* onto *his grandchildren*. He is setting forth a decree (an edict) from generation to generation, from parents to their children, to speak and value *Yah's* blessing throughout all generations, which we do every *Shabbat* until the present day.

The *Yah*-blessed Jacob blessed the Pharaoh (a gentile and not a Believer) twice, going and coming (See *Gen. 47:7, 10*). This pattern is followed by *Yeshua* when He sent out the disciples (the 72). He told them, *"Whatever home you enter, first say, 'Shalom be on this home.' 'If a son of shalom is there, your shalom will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you'" (Luke 10:5-6).* Should we bless people when we do not know their spiritual status in Messiah? I think this passage seems to indicate so. It's also significant that *Yeshua* pronounces blessings to *unlikely recipients* (e.g., random children) when: *"And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them" (Mark 10:16).* Wow, we are to follow his example! I wonder what blessing *Yeshua* spoke to them. Clearly, He spoke His blessing. What is *Yeshua's* Blessing?

Here is the second time *Yeshua* spoke His blessing: *"Then Yeshua led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them."* The footnote reference on this passage is *Numbers 6:22-27*. In *Lev. 9:22* that was what Aaron did: *"Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them. Then he stepped down from presenting the sin offering, the burnt offering and the fellowship offerings"* Aaron was both a prophet and the High Priest. And so, it turns out that *Yeshua's* very last act on earth was to speak his blessing to His disciples. Imagine for a moment His nail-scarred hands stretched out over his wide-eyed disciples (and included with them, you, and I as well): *"Again Adonai spoke to Moses saying, 'Speak to Aaron and to his sons saying: Thus you are to bless Bnei-Yisrael, by saying to them: 'Adonai bless you and keep [guard, protect, compass about with a hedge of safety] you! Adonai make His face to shine on you and be gracious to you! Adonai turn His face [give full attention in a favorable way] toward you and grant you shalom [wholeness, health, security, serenity, well-being, contentment, harmony; an absence of negative stress, disturbance, tension, and conflict]'"* Luke states: *"And while blessing them, He departed from them and was taken up into heaven" (Luke 24:51).* The disciples intensely observed *Yeshua* rising into the clouds and the *last thing they heard* was, *"And I grant you shalom."* Wow! When you consider the last verse in Numbers 6: *"In this way they are to place My Name over Bnei-Yisrael, and so I will bless them"* it makes it abundantly clear that we have the *Yah-Yehovah's* (the Father's) Name placed (imputed) in our foreheads. Can you say, Hallelujah!

There is a principle in Scripture that the greater person, the one in authority, bestows blessing (*"Now it is beyond dispute that the lesser is blessed by the greater" Hebrews 7:7*). Jacob is blessed his father Isaac and by *The Angel of Yah*. Jacob, in turn, blesses his grandchildren and Pharaoh. But how could this man Jacob, who has had such difficult years on earth, somehow be the greater over the pharaoh?

Let us step back for a moment to see the larger narrative. We know that Israel is called to be a blessing to the nations. This was the charge given to Abraham and continues until today. And here we see the namesake Israel (Jacob), blessing the king of a mighty nation in the known ancient world. You see, *Yah's Kingdom* gives authority differently than earthly kingdoms. What kind of human authority would a man have if he has no earthly kingship? The answer is the man who suffered, whose days are few and difficult, who brings blessing to all the nations of the earth with the true and absolute authority of a *Heavenly Kingship*. Perhaps you know of someone else who fits this narrative besides our Father Jacob. Perhaps you and I have that privilege – we are ambassadors from the *Heavenly Kingdom* here on earth.

At this point in Genesis Jacob is walking in his identity as the blesser instead of the blese. That is why he is able to bless his grandchildren from his position. He has learned the value of blessing, his character shaped by struggles, and he is ready to pass this on to Joseph and his sons.

So why would we Messianic Jews bless our children that *Yah* may make them as *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*? Because in this blessing we see all the values of Jacob's life come together: the values of blessing, humility, identity, and hope. *"<sup>21</sup>By faith Jacob, as he was dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and he bowed in worship while leaning on the top of his staff" (Hebrews 11:21).*

Our words have great influence in the lives of those around us, and spoken blessings can bring hope, encouragement, and direction to our families, friends, and others. Many people are experiencing deepening relationships and spiritual encouragement as they discover the power of spoken blessings. A spoken blessing is *a positive, Biblical statement that invokes the blessing of God in the life of another*. The power of spoken blessings comes from Adonai, Who Himself *"<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Messiah" (Ephesians 1:3)*. A spoken blessing is an instrument of the Body of Messiah to administer *Yah's Love*.

But we have an even better blessing we can give people. The priestly blessing recorded in *Numbers 6:24–26 is Yeshua's Godly blessing*. In doing so you place the greatest mark on a person possible: the mark of *Yah!* There is no better mark of ownership in the entire world and with this ownership comes life and life more abundant.

The meaning in the Hebrew is way MORE than what the English conveys because English is abstract while Hebrew is concrete. Praying it in Hebrew affirms that we are in the Father's hands and because of it we are healed, sleep insomnia is gone, provision comes, etc. Here are some keys. **Key 1:** This is the ONLY prayer the Father Himself wrote. **Key 2:** the Hebrew has far deeper meaning than the English. When pray in Hebrew it releases power and impartation. **Key 3:** a Jewish High Priest must pronounce it over you. *Yeshua* is our High Priest and gave us His authority. **Key 4:** the prayer was chanted in Hebrew.

***Yevarechecha Adonai: "The Lord bless you."*** May *Yah-Yehovah* your heavenly Father (He who is {exists}) *barech* (kneel) before you, so He can respond with the covenant response of *hineni* to give you His undivided attention (*hineni* is defined as *The Covenant* response of *'You have my full attention and nothing is distracting me. Everything that I am and have is at your disposal.'*) The good Father (*Yah-Yehovah*) kneels before His child (you) with hands extended in order to minister and bestow His covenant comfort, His covenant gifts and His covenant promises to you. Wow!

***Ve-Yishmerecha: "and keep you."*** (This is the future vav-conversive form of *shamar*, to guard/protect). May *Yah-Yehovah*, your heavenly Father (He who is {exists}) guard (military guarding, what Adam was supposed to do in the Garden over his wife) you with a *hedge of protection (His embrace)* that prevents Satan and all your enemies from harming your body, soul and spirit, mind will and emotions, and your loved ones and all your possessions.

***Yaer Adonai Panav Eilecha: "May the Lord make His face to shine upon you."*** May *Yah-Yehovah*, your heavenly Father (He who is {exists}) illuminate (Reveal) with the wholeness of His being toward

you (*Yaer* comes the verb *Or*, to produce light) and *panav eilecha* means literally *in your face* – bringing you to order so you will fulfill your God-given destiny and purpose because of His Revelation.

***Vi-chunecha*: “And be gracious unto you.”** May *Yah-Yehovah*, your heavenly Father (He who is {exists}) provide you with perfect love and fellowship (never leaving you) by giving you sustenance, provision, and friendship. He says to you “*You are my son (daughter) and I am well pleased*” (the same words He said to *Yeshua* at the Jordan: ‘*You are My Son, whom I love – with You I am well pleased!*’ (Luke 3:22). And: “*This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!*” (Matt. 17:5).

***Yissa Adonai Panav Eilecha*: “The Lord lift up His countenance upon you.”** May *Yah-Yehovah*, your heavenly Father (He who is {exists}) lift up (*nassah* means to lift up and carry) and carry His FULLNESS of being toward you (bringing everything that He is to your disposition), supporting you with His divine embrace and His entire being. He will carry you like the shepherd carries his lambs and like the famous painting of *Yeshua* where there is only one set of footprints.

***Veasem Lecha Shalom*: “And give you peace.”** *Shalom* means much more than absence of war or being still. May *Yah-Yehovah*, your heavenly Father (He who is {exists}) set in place all you need to be whole and complete so you can walk in victory, moment by moment, by the power of His Holy Spirit. May He give you supernatural health, peace, welfare, safety, soundness, tranquility, prosperity, perfection, fullness, rest, harmony, as well as the absence of agitation and discord.

What does ‘*I will put my name upon them*’ mean? To put His Name (*shem*) upon you means to place on you His character, Power, and Authority, i.e., *an impartation*. The only thing exalted more than His Name is His Word (*Torah*). When He breathed upon the man in Genesis the Hebrew word used is *nashem* – He imparted from His own being life to Adam. *Yah* put a mark upon Cain ‘*...so that anyone who found him would not strike him down*’ (Gen. 4:15). How much more does the *Impartation of His Name upon you* mean? *Amen! Shabbat Shalom!*