

Shabbat Vayetse

November 13, 2010

6 Kislev 5771

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News

TRANS-EUROPEAN DIVISION END-YEAR MEETINGS

This week is the time of Winter meetings of the Trans-European Division (TED). The Israel Field (Seventh-day Adventist entity in Israel) is attached to this Division and therefore I participate to this meeting. It is always interesting to see the work in every country of this Division. The TED is the largest world Division, with 40 countries from Pakistan, in Asia, Sudan in Africa to Iceland and Greenland. During this meeting I will have to present a report on the work in Israel but what is very important to me is that I will be in contact with the leaders of these 40 countries to try to motivate them for the Jewish Ministries in their countries. I pray that the L-rd will touch their heart and will understand the necessity of this ministry before the second coming of Mashiach.

IMMERSION SERVICES IN ISRAEL

Our congregations in Israel continues to grow, the Israel Field has the privilege to organize two immersion services at the Jordan River, one organized by Shalom on the 13th, for the congregation of Rehovot and the second one will be organized on the 20th by Oleg for the congregation of Arad. I will be back to Israel on the 18th, that's why I will have the privilege to attend the service of the 20th at the Jordan River. I hope that I will be able to take some pictures and to post them in this newsletter.

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BETH BNEI TSION, BUENOS AIRES

David Barzola, the pastor/rav of the congregation of Buenos Aires sent us an e-mail with a very good news. They are very inventive and creative in their congregation to organize events and to help the members to invite their Jewish friends.

They are organizing a concert in their synagogue. We know that there are a lot of musician among Jews. The Jewish people has always loved music and already praised the L-rd in the Bible with musical instruments and music.

So I am pleased to announce that the Jewish Adventist congregation in Buenos Aires invites everyone to attend a concert on Saturday 13 November at 8:00 PM.





OVERVIEW

VAYETSE - וַיֵּצֵא

GENESIS 28:10-32:3

Fleeing from Esau, Jacob leaves Be'er Sheva and sets out for Charan, the home of his mother's family. After a 14-year stint in the Torah Academy of Shem and Ever, he resumes his journey and comes to Mount Moriah, the place where his father Isaac was brought as an offering, and the future site of the Beit Hamikdash. He sleeps there and dreams of angels going up and down a ladder between Heaven and earth. G-d promises him the Land of Israel, that he will found a great nation and that he will enjoy Divine protection.

Jacob wakes and vows to build an altar there and tithe all that he will receive. Then he travels to Charan and meets his cousin Rachel at the well. He arranges with her father, Laban, to work seven years for her hand in marriage, but Laban fools Jacob, substituting Rachel's older sister, Leah. Jacob commits himself to work another seven years in order to also marry Rachel. Leah bears four sons: Reuven, Shimon, Levi and Yehuda, the first Tribes of Israel. Rachel is barren, and in an attempt to give Jacob children, she gives her handmaiden Bilhah to Jacob as a wife. Bilhah bears Dan and Naftali. Leah also gives Jacob her handmaiden Zilpah, who bears Gad and Asher. Leah then bears Yissachar, Zevulun, and a daughter, Dina. Hashem finally blesses Rachel with a son, Yosef. Jacob decides to leave Laban, but Laban, aware of the wealth Jacob has made for him, is reluctant to let him go, and concludes a contract of employment with him. Laban tries to swindle Jacob, but Jacob becomes extremely wealthy. Six years later, Jacob, aware that Laban has become dangerously resentful of his wealth, flees with his family. Laban pursues them but is warned by Hashem not to harm them. Jacob and Laban agree to a covenant and Laban returns home. Jacob continues on his way to face his brother Esau.

STONES:

SPIRITUAL PROTECTION

Rabbi Shaul wrote, "All scripture is given by inspiration of G-d, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2Tim 3:16). Our sages say that whatever happened to our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the patriarchs of the Jewish people, is a sign and guide for their descendants. Thus, the stories the Torah tells about the patriarchs and matriarchs are not merely to tell us historical events of thousands of years ago, but serve as a lesson for every Jew, in every country, in every generation.

Rabbi Shaul said too, "Now all these things happened to them by way of example, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come." (1 Cor 10:11). One of the episodes told in this week's Parasha, Vayetse, which is about Jacob's travel to Charan to the home of his uncle and future father-in-law, Laban, where he spent twenty years, is how he prepared for this journey.

Rabbi Marozov affirms, The Torah tells us that on the way he passed by Bet-El, Jacob prayed and went to sleep for the night. It was there that Jacob made his final preparations before leaving the land, which was later to be the homeland of the Jewish people, and continuing onto the land of Charan, which comes from the word "anger." A country where it's people made G-d angry through their behavior.

How does Jacob prepare himself for this transition from the holy land and the security of his parents' home to this unholy place? The Torah tells us that after he prayed, "He took from the stones of that place and placed them around his head."

The Torah commentator, Rashi, explains the reason that Jacob placed the stones around his head, "Because he was afraid of the wild beasts." He placed the stones around his head for protection.

The obvious question is: If Jacob was afraid for his physical welfare why did he place the stones only around his head? He should have placed them around his entire body for protection?

Jacob knew that coming to Charan he would have to deal with physical and monetary matters. He was afraid that they may pull him away from his connection to G-d. He was worried that he may

be too involved in making a living and thus forget the purpose of it all; that everything is from G-d, Who gives us the strength to accomplish whatever we have to accomplish.

Thus, Jacob placed “the stones of that place around his head.” He said to himself, “Even when I will have to work and be involved in my family’s physical success, my “head;” i.e my thoughts will be protected by the holy stones of this holy place upon which the Holy Temple would later be built, so that the Torah study of these fourteen years and the holy atmosphere of my parents’ home will stay with me throughout the years in Charan.

This is a lesson for each and every one of us. Although we spend so much of our time being involved in our physical and monetary success, we must remember the purpose of it all. We have to remember to place as much emphasis on our spiritual success as on our physical and make sure that they enhance each other.

THE HOUSE OF G-D

The Torah states, **Surely the L-rd is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of G-d, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If G-d 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, So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the L-rd be my G-d: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be G-d’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee. (Genesis 28:16b-22).** In short, what happens here is that Jacob encounters G-d. His response is to erect a monument or, in Hebrew, *matzeva*, which he vows to transform into a House of G-d upon his return. His vow is symbolic, an expression of his aspirations. He hopes that he will realize this potential, and the blessings bestowed upon him will come to their fruition, and he will fulfill the destiny that he senses about this awesome place and this rock—to become a House of G-d.

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL TODAY

The secret of Jacob’s ability to overcome Laban, and to succeed in preserving the heritage of Abraham and Isaac, lies in his constant recollection of the great dream that he dreamt at the beginning of his sojourn in exile. G-d’s presence in the house of Jacob was a palpable one. He always felt G-d’s presence over him and thus his vision of the long game that he was to play triumphed over the near sighted short game that Laban always played. Jacob, who is aware and confident in G-d’s promise that “I will be with you,” realizes that reversals and even tragedies are still only temporary events in the march of Jewish history.

The torah says, **“And G-d came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.” (Gen. 31:24)** Rabbi Wein comments “It is the constant recollection of his great vision and dream that fuels Jacob’s strength and sense of purpose. Laban’s vision from Heaven is merely a warning not to further harm Jacob. But he lacks grander visions - no ladders that can ascend heavenward and no sense of eternity. In this respect Laban and Esau resemble each other acutely. They are all about “now” - the additional pot of lentils and labor that can be squeezed out of the weak and defenseless with no thought about the ultimate future and the consequences of their behavior. Jacob states that “tomorrow I will come into my reward”—Believers are concerned about their ultimate tomorrow and not just their today. He who is concerned about tomorrow is also successful today.

YEHUDIM OR JEWS

Why are the Jewish people called “Yehudim”? When Leah, gave birth to her fourth child she called him “Yehuda” to give thanks to the Almighty, from this name came the word “Yehudim” Jews, to be a Jew is to give thanks to G-d.

Three times a day—the morning, the afternoon, the night—a Jew stops his activity to focus on the Almighty to give thanks and to make requests. Three times a day the prayer service trains them to develop spirituality by focusing on gratitude. Why not the follow this example and to build a daily program of prayers just to give thanks to G-d.

WHERE ARE OUR FURNITURE?

A wealthy man from a distant land once came to visit a venerated sage. The sage's house was a simple, dilapidated hut. The interior was even shoddier. The sage was sitting at a table made of rough-hewn logs. None of the chairs matched each other, and the tablecloth was threadbare.

The sage greeted him kindly and pointed to a chair. "Please sit down."

The wealthy visitor gingerly tested the chair and sat down. He seemed surprised that it did not collapse under his weight.

"I don't understand," he said. "How can a great and famous person like you have furniture like this? Why don't you have real furniture?"

The sage smiled. "Tell me, my good friend, do you have good furniture?"

"Of course, I do. It is actually quite elegant - and solid like a rock."

"I see. And where is this furniture? Do you have it with you?"

"With me? You must be joking! Don't you know that I'm traveling? You don't take furniture along when you're only passing through!"

"You certainly don't," said the sage. "Well, you see, I am also only passing through. I'm going to be here in this world for a limited time only. Just like you, I don't need furniture when I'm passing through."

We are all passing through this world, on our way to a far better place. Like our forefather Jacob, we should not allow ourselves to be taken in by the illusions of materialism. We should always remember that "bread is for eating and clothes are for wearing." If we are fortunate enough to be blessed with affluence, we should not view the accumulation of wealth as an end in itself. Rather, we should use the freedom and expansiveness that wealth provides as a means to achieve continuous personal growth. In this way, we can enjoy material satisfaction in this world while we accumulate spiritual wealth for the continuation of our journey toward eternal life.

TORAH ETHICS

Amos Bunim writes about his father Irving Bunim, in "A Fire in His Soul": Once in the early 1950's, Julliard, in the midst of selling their company to United Merchants, was closing out its inventory and sold Bunim a large amount of velveteen. The shipment of many large boxes seemed fine until Bunim received the bill.

"Carton #1", it read, "38 yards." Bunim looked at it quizzically. "38 yards?" he asked himself. "I did not receive anything with 38 yards of goods." Puzzled, he went to the basement to check and discovered that the billing clerk at A.D. Julliard had inadvertently dropped the first digit. Carton #1 contained not 38 yards of velveteen, but 338 yards. "Carton #2," he read, "42 yards." A quick glance at carton #2 showed the same thing had happened. Bunim checked every item on the list and found that they were all the same. In every case, the first digit had been omitted. \$40,000.00 then, an enormous sum. "Too big for them to miss," Bunim thought. "They will correct it shortly."

In the meantime he paid for the merchandise as the bill was rendered. Julliard did not find the error. After waiting two months, Bunim called Julliard's billing department and told them that he thought there had been a mistake. "I'd like to know," he asked, "is everything settled?" "Do I owe you any money?" The clerk checked Eden's file and told him that everything was clear and that they owed no money. "In fact, Mr. Bunim," he added cheerfully, "your account is closed. You're all paid up." Bunim thanked the man, hung up, and called Julliard again.

The second time, he asked for the president's office, and made an appointment with Mr. Valentine for the

EDITOR

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next day. When the two men met and cordially shook hands, Bunim told Valentine, "I want you know that today's a Jewish holiday. Valentine, who did business with many Jews, looked puzzled. "I was not aware today is a Jewish holiday," he said. "What is it?" "Today is the day," Bunim answered, "that a Jewish businessman shows you what our Torah ethics and morality demand of us." He then explained to the surprised Valentine what had happened. "I received merchandise from you," Bunim said, "and I owe you money for it. Here is a check for \$40,000.00- money that you had no idea was ever coming to you." "That moment," Bunim later told his family, "when Mr. Valentine realized what G-d's holy Torah means to us, was the greatest Kiddush HASHEM a man could ask for."

HAFTARAH

Hosea 11:7-14:10

PARASHA: This week's Parasha tells us that Jacob left his home to go to his uncle Laban. On the way he slept in Bethel and had a dream – the dream of the ladder. "He dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of G-d were ascending and descending on it. And the L-RD stood beside him and said, "I am the L-RD, the G-d of Abraham your father and the G-d of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; ." (Genesis 28:11-13).

HAFTARAH: Hosea reminds us of Jacob's dream saying. "he met him at Bethel, and there he spoke with him. The L-RD the G-d of hosts, the L-RD is his name!" (Hosea 12:4,5). It is interesting that Hosea said that Jacob met the L-rd and spoke to him while Yochanan said it was Yeshua, "The Son of Man," the title of the Mashiach in Daniel 7. Hosea reminds us that Jacob was guarded by G-d. No prophet spoke to Jacob. G-d spoke directly to him, not like when the people of Israel left Egypt. "Jacob fled to the land of Aram, there Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he guarded sheep. By a prophet the L-rd brought Israel up from Egypt, and by a prophet he was guarded. (Hosea 12:12-13).

HAFTARAH: Hosea said that the return of Jacob to his land will also be a return to G-d, Jacob is the representative of G-d's people who are to return to G-d. "Return, O Israel, to the L-RD your G-d" (Hosea 14:1).

BRIT HACHADASHA

John 1:43-51

This chapter is in the context of Yeshua's first talmidim calling. Yeshua has already chosen Andrew and Shim'on, two brothers who were fishing on the sea of Galilee. Yeshua was thinking to leave the place he was in and he met Philip. Philip followed Yeshua and was so enthusiastic that he went to say to his friend Nathanael that he had found the Mashiach.

Everyone was waiting for the Mashiach, it was the exact time G-d gave to Daniel in his chapter 9 verses 24-27, seventy-weeks or 483 years have passed from the reconstruction of Jerusalem. But Nathanael didn't believe, as Yeshua was from Nazareth (he was raised there), that is not what the prophets said about the Mashiach who should be a descendant of King David, who should be born in Bethlehem, the city of David (they did not have all the biographical information about Yeshua). Nazareth was a very small town, a few hundreds of inhabitants. Who could imagine that Mashiach was there.

Philip had no argument, so he said to his friend, "come and see", What Nathanael saw convinced him. Yeshua gave him one of the great revelation of the Brit-HaChadasha, the ladder of Jacob was about him, explaining the Mashiach was the Sulam Yaacov "I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of G-d ascending and descending on the Son of Man." John 1:51

Jacob dreamt about this ladder, he saw the angel of G-d ascending and descending on it, and he heard a voice saying "I am Yahweh, the G-d of Abraham your father, and the G-d of Isaac." (Gen 28:13) G-d had spoken directly to Jacob, not a prophet, not an angel... However about twenty years later, G-d appeared again to Jacob as the angel of G-d: "The angel of G-d said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I am.' . . . I am the G-d of Bethel, where you anointed a pillar, where you vowed a vow to me. Now arise, get out from this land, and return to the land of your birth." (Gen 31 :11-13). The G-d of Bethel is the angel of G-d, which is a manifestation of the Mashiach. This same angel or Mashiach appeared to Abraham near the oaks of Mamre (Gen 18), the same angel or Mashiach fought with Jacob during the night (Gen 32), this same angel or Mashiach appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3)

