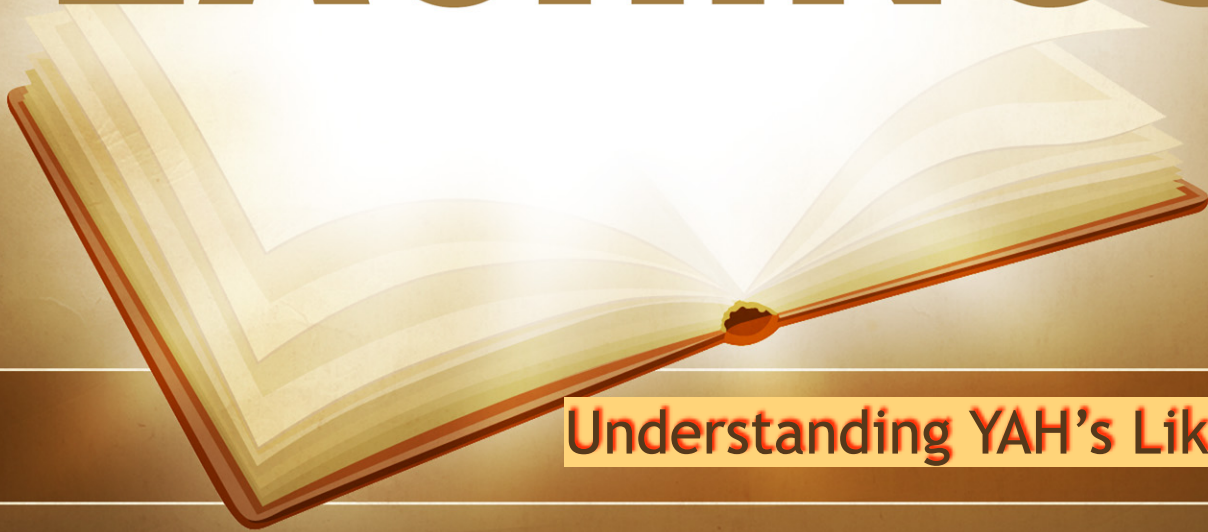


TORAH TEACHINGS



Understanding YAH's Likes and dislikes

#8 Vayishlah (וַיִּשְׁלַח)

— Hebrew for “and he sent,”

Torah: Genesis 32:4-36:43
Haftarah: Obadiah 1:1-21

TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

Jacob returns to the Set Apart Land after a 20-year stay in Charan, and sends angel-emissaries to Esau in hope of a reconciliation, but his messengers report that his brother is on the warpath with 400 armed men. Jacob prepares for war, prays, and sends Esau a large gift (consisting of hundreds of heads of livestock) to appease him.

TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

That night, Jacob ferries his family and possessions across the Jabbok River; he, however, remains behind and encounters the angel that embodies the spirit of Esau, with whom he wrestles until daybreak. Jacob suffers a dislocated hip but vanquishes the supernal creature, who bestows on him the name Israel, which means “he who prevails over the divine.”

TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

Jacob and Esau meet, embrace and kiss, but part ways. Jacob purchases a plot of land near Shechem, whose crown prince—also called Shechem—abducts and rapes Jacob's daughter Dinah. Dinah's brothers Simeon and Levi avenge the deed by killing all male inhabitants of the city, after rendering them vulnerable by convincing them to circumcise themselves.

TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

Jacob journeys on. Rachel dies while giving birth to her second son, Benjamin, and is buried in a roadside grave near Bethlehem. Reuben loses the birthright because he interferes with his father's marital life. Jacob arrives in Hebron, to his father Isaac, who later dies at age 180.

(Rebecca has passed away before Jacob's arrival.)

TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

Our Parshah concludes with a detailed account of Esau's wives, children and grandchildren; the family histories of the people of Seir, among whom Esau settled; and a list of the eight kings who ruled Edom, the land of Esau's and Seir's descendants.

Gen 32:1 And Ya'aqob went on his way, and the messengers of Elohim met him.

Gen 32:2 And when Ya'aqob saw them, he said, "This is the camp of Elohim." And he called the name of that place Maḥanayim.

Gen 32:3 And Ya'aqob sent messengers before him to Ėsaw his brother in the land of Sě'ir, the field of Edom

Gen 32:4 and he commanded them, saying, “Say this to my master Ėsaw, ‘Your servant Ya’aqob said this, “I have sojourned with Laban and stayed there until now.”

Gen 32:5 “And I have bulls, and donkeys, flocks, and male and female servants. And I have sent to inform my master, to find favour in your eyes.” ’ ”

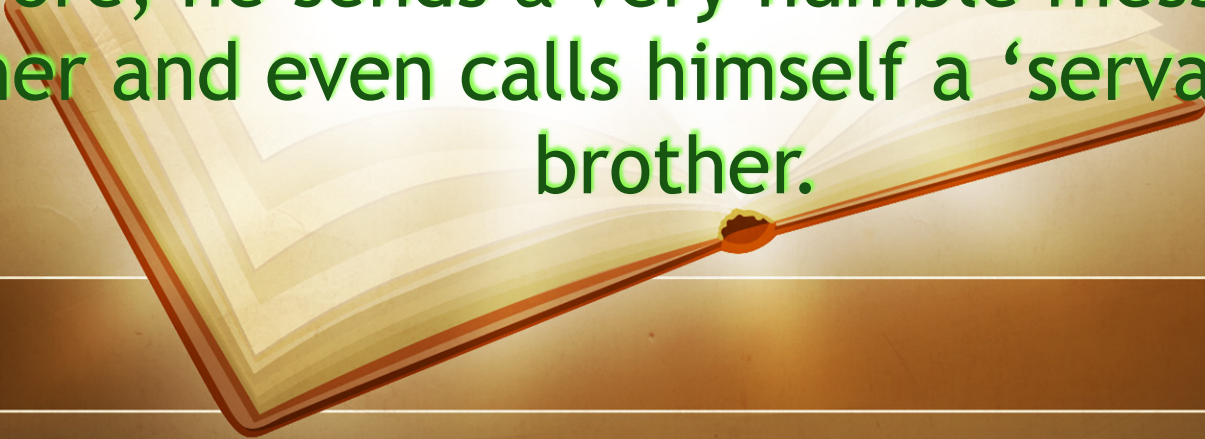
Ya'aqob had now left Laban and was headed home and this week's Torah portion is called - וַיִּשְׁלַח - **vayishlah**, which means, 'and he sent' and comes from the root word שָׁלַח **shalah** (shaw-lakh') - Strong's H7971 which means, '*to send, bid farewell, let go, put forth, stretch out, direct, urgently send*'.

In Berēshith/Genesis 32:1 we see that Ya'aqob had left Laban and was then met by the messengers of Elohim and he called the place מַחֲנַיִם Maḥanayim (makh-an-ah'-yim)- Strong's H4266 which means, '*two camps*', and as we will see in the next Torah portion, it was from here that he divided his family into two groups, in order to meet his brother Ėsaw, with shalom; and in many ways pictures the prophetic picture of the fullness of Yisra'ēl's two camps (House of Yisra'ēl and House of Yehudah) being fully provided for in Messiah (as pictured by Yosēph).

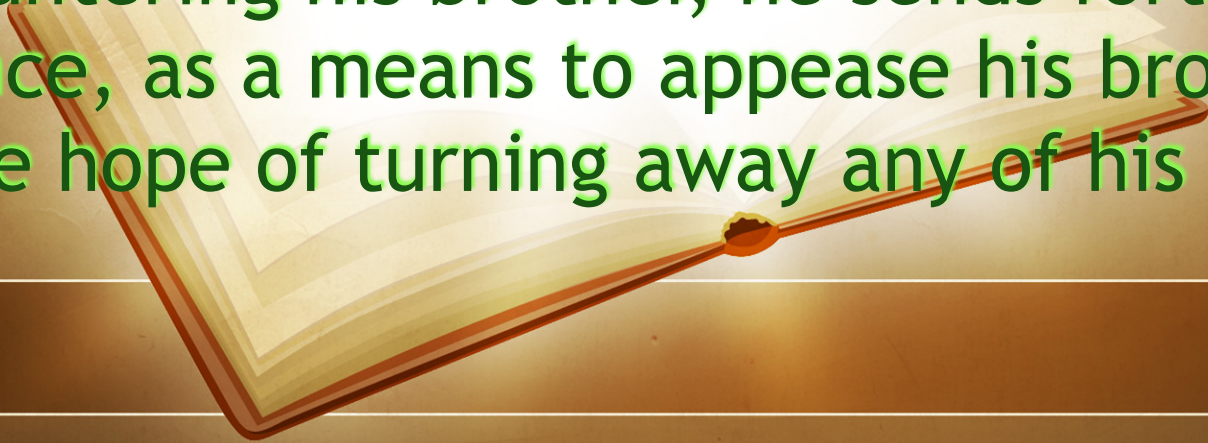
From this point, Ya'aqob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Ėsaw, in a style of humility that was done as a means to have some form of reconciliation and meet in peace.

שְׂעִיר Sě'ir (say-eer') - Strong's H8165 is a mountain range in Edom, that lies south of the Dead Sea, and the name means, '*shaggy, hairy*' which comes from the word שְׂעָר se'ar (say-awr') - Strong's H8181 which means, '*hair, hairy*'.

As Ya'aqob nears home, he is filled with memories of his dealings with his brother Ėsaw and how his brother had hated him and wanted to kill him, and therefore, he sends a very humble message to his brother and even calls himself a 'servant' of his brother.

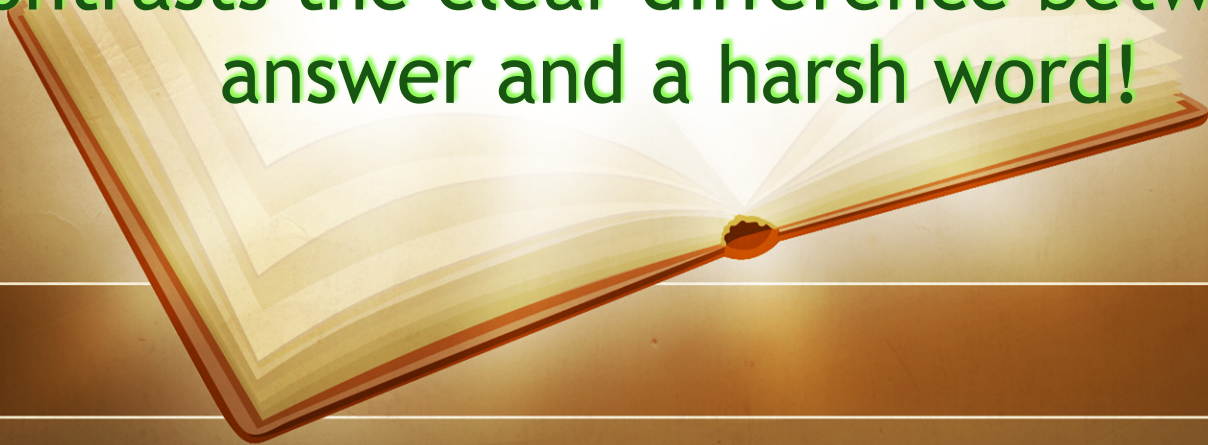


And what we can glean from this, is that while Ya'aqob may have certainly been very unsure of how his brother would react to seeing him again, and while he was greatly afraid of the prospect of encountering his brother, he sends forth gifts, in advance, as a means to appease his brother, with the hope of turning away any of his wrath.



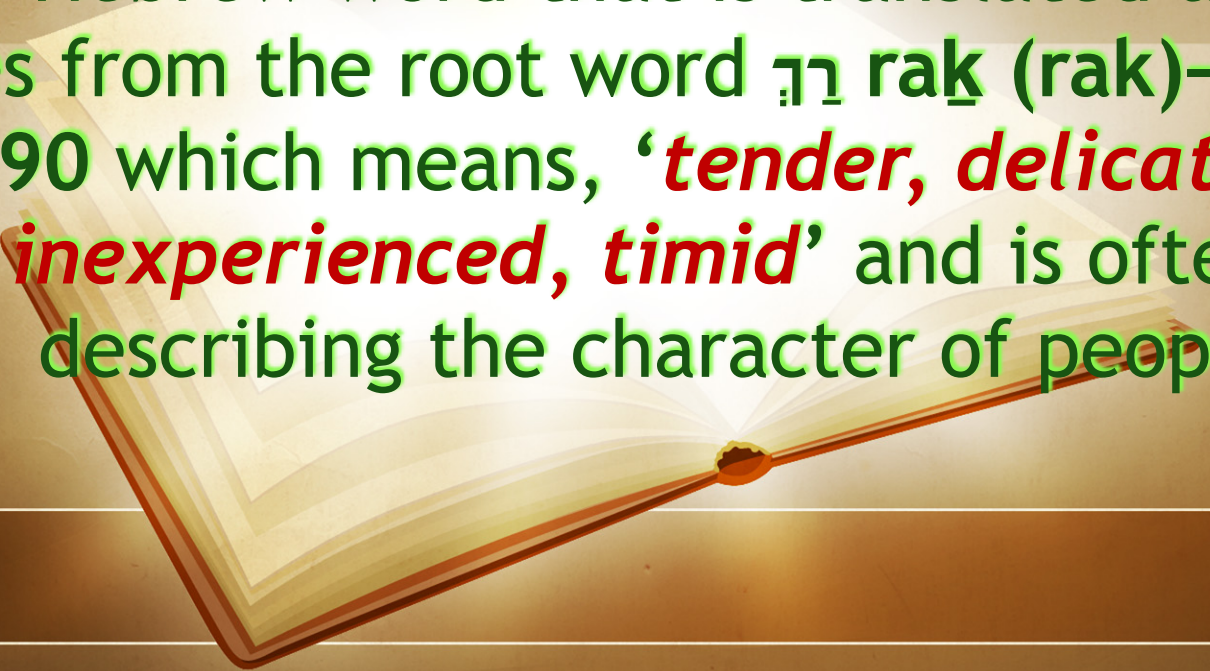
Mishlě/Proverbs 15:1 “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up displeasure.”

Here Shelomoh identifies the power of one's words and contrasts the clear difference between a soft answer and a harsh word!



A soft answer:


The Hebrew word that is translated as 'soft' comes from the root word רַךְ *rak* (rak)- Strong's H7390 which means, '*tender, delicate, soft, frail, inexperienced, timid*' and is often used in describing the character of people.



Dawid said of Shelomoh the following:

Dibre haYamim Aleph/1 Chronicles 22:5 “And


Dawid said, “Shelomoh my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be built for יהוה is to be exceedingly great, for a splendid Name, to all the lands. Please, let me make preparation for it.” So Dawid made extensive preparations before his death.”



The Hebrew word that is translated as 'answer' is מַעֲנֶה ma'aneh (mah-an-eh')- Strong's H4617 which means, 'an answer, response', and comes from the root verb עָנָה anah (aw-naw')- Strong's H6030 which means, 'to sing, utter tunefully, be occupied with, cry'.

This word is used 329 times and relates to giving an answer, testifying, as well as shouting with joy, often as a response to being a faithful witness!

Hoshěa/Hosea 2:14-15 “Therefore, see, I am alluring her, and shall lead her into the wilderness, and shall speak to her heart, 15 and give to her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Akor as a door of expectation. And there she shall respond as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Mitsrayim.”



Here, in Hoshěa/Hosea, it is translated as 'respond' and in the KJV it is translated as 'sing'; and we are able to learn from this the clear picture of the true response of a bride that has been led into the Wilderness in order to hear the sweet tender words of her Husband and King.

A 'soft answer', therefore, speaks of a response that is done in a tender and delicate manner, which certainly does not show weakness but rather a mature strength in the Word!

How often do we find ourselves 'reacting' in an aggressive manner to words or actions that we did not like or approve of?

Reacting in a harsh manner as opposed to a tender and delicate one can fuel a fire of displeasure and start a verbal or even physical battle that only leads to harm and loss.

With Shelomoh telling us that a soft answer turns away wrath, we can and must learn how important our response to aggression is.

There may be times when someone comes at you with harshness and malicious intent, and the best way to turn the wrath away, is to give a soft, tender, delicate and controlled response, as opposed to an irrational response that is done with harshness!

With the sending of messengers before him, Ya'aqob was taking a prudent precaution, in order to properly ascertain the present temper of Ėsaw.

How do you react when you remember the wrong dealings that you had with someone close, even a family member?

Ya'aqob was afraid for his own life and the life of his family, as it had been 20 years since he had left home, after fleeing the wrath of his brother.

So many today live in the fear of their past sins, and here, in 'preparing for the worst', Ya'aqob, in distress, divides his people into 2 groups, so that if the one group was attacked by an angry brother, the other could escape.

What do you do when you are facing the prospect of facing past enemies?

Ya'aqob did not inquire of יהוה, and so we take note that it was Ya'aqob who divided the people into 2 groups and not Elohim!

If Ya'aqob had simply sought the face of יהוה, I am sure that he would have saved himself a great deal of stressful planning and scheming.

Many of us today do the same, when facing a 'seeming crisis', in that we often try to work out various plans and strategies instead of seeking wisdom from יהוה and trusting in His Sure Word that must guide our every step!