



THE CHEVRA

Young Israel of Fair Lawn
The Morris J. Kraut z'l Torah Center

Joe Smith - President

This Shabbat:

Parashat Vayishlach

18 Kislev, 5767

December 8, 9 - 2006

The Haftorah is "Chazon Ovadia"
read from the book of Ovadiah..

Friday

Candle Lighting 4:10 PM

Mincha 4:15 PM

Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM

Shacharit 9:00 AM

Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:28 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 4:10 PM

Maariv and Havdala 4:16 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:00 AM

Next Shabbat:

Parashat Vayeshev

25 Kislev, 5767

December 15, 16 - 2006

The Haftorah is read in Zechariah
2:14-4:7.

Friday

Candle Lighting 4:11 PM

Mincha 4:15 PM

Shabbat

Chevra Mishnayos Shiur 8:00 AM

Shacharit 9:00 AM

Sof Zman Keriat Shema: 9:33 AM (Gra"h)

Mincha 4:10 PM

Maariv and Havdala 5:16 PM

Sunday Shacharit 8:00 AM

Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to our founders Edith and Paul Cooper on the marriage of their granddaughter Yael to Seth Schmulowitz of Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

Mazel Tov to Yael's parents, Sari and Ira Cooper as well as the entire Cooper and Schmulowitz families on this great occasion. May Yael and Seth build a Bayis Ne'emom B'Yisroel and celebrate many Smachos with their families for many years to come.

Torah Enrichment Center

On Wednesday December 13 at 8pm, at Shomrei Torah, the Fair Lawn community will have the pleasure of hosting Rabbi Kenneth Brander, Dean of Yeshiva University Center for the Jewish Future.

Rabbi Brander will speak about a YU Fair Lawn partnership in establishing a Torah Enrichment Center to enhance our community.

Yom Iyun

A Yom Iyun for Women, sponsored by Evelyn and Larry Kraut, in memory of Evelyn's mother, Elaine Silver A"H, will take place at Shomrei Torah on Sunday, December 10 at 8:45 AM. Breakfast will be served. Please call Emma 201-797-2860 or Irene 201-791-7133 to RSVP.

Torah Insights – Harav Shlomo Riskin

Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Vayishlach

Genesis 32:4-36:43

By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel – This week's Biblical reading provides a stunning climax to the riveting stories of Jacob – how and why this most clearly defined patriarch of the twelve tribes returns to his father's house, establishes the monument to G-d in Bet El as he had vowed, and merits the new name of Yisrael, the name by which his descendants shall be known forever. What is the secret behind this name, what is the true significance of the wrestling match, and why does it take Jacob such a long time to finally arrive home after his having left Laban. (He leaves Laban in chapter 29 at the end of last week's reading

and he doesn't return to Isaac's house until verse 27 of chapter 35!).

We have already seen how the naïve whole-hearted dweller of tents became a scheming deceiver, first manipulating his elder brother into selling him the birthright, then pretending to be the brother he was not, and finally resorting to all manners of subterfuge in order to outsmart the wise-alec Laban and come out with the majority of his flocks. Indeed, the hands of the aggressive animal-hunter and people-trapper Esau overcame the spiritually pure voice of Jacob, so that Jacob turned into Esau and truly proved worthy of his name: Ya'akov, the circumventing and crooked grasper of his elder brother's heel. Yes, he turned himself into this "drey around" in order to gain the father's love he so needed and yearned for; nevertheless, he was indeed the crooked Ya'akov, who had twice circumvented the legitimate gains which were his brother's just due (Gen 27:36).

Jacob succeeds in burying his true character and expressing his first name – until he suddenly and literally wakes up to his genuine and original vocation as a result of his realization that his very dreams have become sullied and transformed: he no longer sees angels ascending and descending a ladder connecting heaven and earth but he rather now sees speckled and striped and spotted sheep. And this latter dream is not what he wishes to bequeath to the son he has just born, Joseph the eldest child of his beloved Rachel.

In his oath more than two decades before, Jacob had predicated his acceptance of Y-HVH as his G-d

upon his return to his father's house in peace; he then thought that meant his favored acceptance by his father as a newly improved model Esau. Now Jacob realizes that the very opposite is the case: he must find the courage to be what he really is, a wholehearted dweller of tents, whether his father values it or not; he must become his own man, G-d's man and not necessarily his father's man. Only then will he be free to be himself!

He leaves Laban – and wiley Labanism. He is ready to confront Esau – and return his unearned blessing by giving his elder brother his crookedly gained material blessing and flocks. But first he must stand alone – he and G-d - and exorcize Esauism, the very desire to become Esau in order to gain paternal favor, from the very depth of his being. He wrestles with himself – and comes back to his true self. He is no longer the crooked Ya'akov; he becomes the straight and upright Yisra or Yashar person of G-d (El).

He is now almost ready to return home; he must first, however, test out his new persona of walking in a straight line rather than "dreying" around and cutting corners. He takes Shimon and Levy to task for selling Shechem a bill of goods about circumcision in a war of subterfuge rather than confronting them as terrorist – rapists head-on: "You have muddied me, causing me to stink in the eyes of the inhabitants of the land..." (34:30); you desecrated G-d's name by having been disingenuous. Jacob then weeps and mourns the death of his mother's nurse and nanny Devorah – but Rebecca, who instigated Jacob's

crookedness, is not mourned or even mentioned at all!

Rachel then dies in child-birth for having deceived her father and stolen his teraphim, presumably because she believed that the terpahim (or trophies) – a tangible sign of the heir to the family fortune – rightfully belonged to Jacob, who had worked alongside her father so diligently and capably. But Jacob said it properly and morally: "The one in whose possession are the terafim shall not live;" (31:32) a birthright dare not be stolen, and a man's wife is equal to the man himself!

And finally, "And Reuven went and lay with Bilhah, his father's mistress..." (35:22). Reuven usurps his father's place in a most blatant and pornographic manner; he deserves to be punished, perhaps even banished from the family. Jacob is justifiably furious. But the newborn Yisrael also understands that he must directly take responsibility and own up to his own weaknesses. Was this not a desperate (albeit unfortunate) cry of pain, a poorly designed and badly executed declaration that he – Reuven – was his father's rightful heir and that he should not have been cast aside in favor of Joseph, younger first-born of the more favored wife?!

A wisened and chastened Yisrael understands that he must assume a large portion of the blame for Reuven's immoral act – and so he hears of the incident and overlooks it. His silence allows him to remain the patriarch of the twelve tribes – and his silence also gains him the catharsis of self-forgiveness for his act of deception which he so yearns to receive. After all, if his misguided

paternal favoritism allows him to forgive the transgression of Reuven, ought not Isaac's misguided paternal favoritism of Esau allow him – Jacob – to be forgiven of his transgression towards his father Isaac? And so now, "Jacob returns to Isaac his father" (35:27) in peace within himself, at last. Finally "The crooked has become straight," (Vehava he'akov le'mishor – Isaiah 40:4).

Shabbat Shalom
Shlomo Riskin
Chancellor Ohr Torah Stone
Chief Rabbi - Efrat Israel

Gesher - Tora Links

Join over 80,000 boys world-wide in a Motzai Shabbos Learning Program

Who: For boys of all ages!

What: Learn with your parent or other adult. There will be a raffle and refreshments each week for those who attend.

When: Saturday nights 7:00-8:00 p.m.
December 9-30 at **Sephardic Center** of Fair Lawn 40-34 Terhune Place (corner of Saddle River Road).

January 6-27 at Congregation **Shomrei Torah**, 19-10 Morlot Avenue

Details for February and the grand raffle will be forthcoming

GRAND RAFFLE PRIZE: MOUNTAIN BIKE

The more you come the better are your chances of winning!

Anyone who attends at least 8 weeks will receive a certificate and a prize!

An adult partner must accompany all boys

Gesher Torah Links is a New Jersey-based Jewish outreach and education organization touching the lives of

thousands of Jews through over 100 weekly classes in some forty communities. For more information please call Rabbi Yitzchok Weinberger at 484-620-6187 or e-mail nnj@torahlinks.org

From Our Sages on the Parasha

And Jacob was greatly afraid, and he was distressed (Genesis 32:8)

He was afraid that he might be killed, and distressed that he might kill.
(Midrash Rabbah)

And [Jacob] bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother (33:3)

When Mordechai refused to bow to Haman, they said to him: "You're going to get us all killed! How dare you go against the decree of the king?"

Said Mordechai: "I am a Jew."

Said they to him: "Did not [our] forefathers bow to his forefather?"

Replied Mordechai: "I am descendant of Benjamin, who was in his mother's womb at that time. Just as my forefather did not bow, so, too, I shall not kneel nor bow."

(Midrash)

SHABBAT SHALOM
