

Parsha Plug: Parshat Vayishlach

<p>Bereshit 32: 25-33, 33:1, 8-11</p>	<p>בראשית לב: כה-לג, לג: א, ח-יא</p>
<p>25 And Yaakov was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. 26 When he saw that he could not prevail against him, he touched the socket of his hip, and the socket of Yaakov's hip became dislocated as he wrestled with him. 27 And he (the angel) said, "Let me go, for dawn is breaking," but he (Yaakov) said, "I will not let you go unless you have blessed me." 28 So he said to him, "What is your name?" and he said, "Yaakov." 29 And he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Yaakov, but Yisrael, because you have struggled with God and with men, and you have prevailed." 30 And Yaakov asked and said, "Now tell me your name," and he said, "Why is it that you ask for my name?" And he blessed him there. 31 And Yaakov named the place Peniel, for [he said,] "I saw God face to face, and my soul was saved." 32 And the sun rose for him when he passed Penuel, and he was limping on his thigh. 33 Therefore, the children of Israel may not eat the displaced tendon, which is on the socket of the hip, until this day, for he touched the socket of Yaakov's hip, in the hip sinew. 1 Yaakov lifted his eyes and saw, and behold, Esav was coming, and with him were four hundred men; so he divided the children with Leah and with Rachel and with the two maidservants...8 And he said, "What is to you [the purpose of] all this camp that I have met?" And he said, "To find favor in my master's eyes." 9 But Esav said, "I have plenty, my brother; let what you have remain yours." 10 Thereupon Yaakov said, "Please no! If indeed I have found favor in your eyes, then you shall take my gift from my hand, because I have seen your face, which is like seeing the face of God, and you have accepted me. 11 Now take my gift, which has been brought to you, for God has favored me [with it], and [because] I have everything." He prevailed upon him, and he took [it].</p>	<p>(כה) וַיִּתֵּר יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ וַיֵּאֱבֹק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר: (כו) וַיֵּרָא פִּי לֹא יָכַל לוֹ וַיִּגַע בְּכַרְיִרְכּוֹ וַתִּקַּע פְּהַיִּיךָ יַעֲקֹב בְּהֶאֱבֹקוֹ עִמּוֹ: (כז) וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחֲנִי כִּי עֹלֵה הַשָּׁחַר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁלְּחֶיךָ כִּי אִם-בֵּרַכְתָּנִי: (כח) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מִה-שָׂמַיִךְ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב: (כט) וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֹאמֶר עוֹד שְׂמַיִךְ כִּי אִם-יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי-יִשְׁרִית עִם-אֱלֹקִים וְעִם-אֲנָשִׁים וַתּוֹכַל: (ל) וַיִּשְׁאַל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הַגִּידָה נָא שְׂמֶיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶה תִּשְׁאַל לְשֵׁמִי וַיַּבְרַךְ אֹתוֹ שֵׁם: (לא) וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם פְּנֵי-אֵל כִּי-רָאִיתִי אֱלֹקִים פְּנִים אֶל-פְּנִים וַתִּנְצַל נַפְשִׁי: (לב) וַיִּזְכַּח-לוֹ הַשֵּׁמֶשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָבַר אֶת-פְּנוּאֵל וְהוּא צֹלַע עַל-יָרְכּוֹ: (לג) עַל-פְּנֵי לֹא-יֵאָכְלוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-גִּיד הַנֶּזֶק אֲשֶׁר עַל-יָרֵךְ הַיָּרֵךְ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי נִגַע בְּכַרְיִיךָ יַעֲקֹב בְּגִיד הַנֶּזֶק: (א) וַיִּשָּׂא יַעֲקֹב עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה עֹשׂוֹ בָּא וְעִמּוֹ אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ וַיַּחֲזֵק אֶת-הַקְּלָדִים עַל-לְאָה וְעַל-רָחֵל וְעַל שְׁתֵּי הַשִּׁפְחוֹת: (ח) וַיֹּאמֶר מִי לָךְ כָּל-הַמַּחֲנֶה הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר פָּגַשְׁתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר לְמַצְאֹתוֹן בְּעֵינֵי אֲדֹנָי: (ט) וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב אַחֵי יְהִי לָךְ אֲשֶׁר-לָךְ: (י) וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֵל-נָא אִם-נָא מִצְאֵתִי חֹן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְלִקְחֹת מִנְחָתִי מִיָּדִי כִּי עַל-פְּנֵי רְאִיתִי פְּנֶיךָ פְּרִאת פְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים וַתִּרְצַנֵּנִי: (יא) קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּרִכְתִּי אֲשֶׁר הִבַּאת לָךְ כִּי-תִּחַנְנֵנִי אֱלֹקִים וְכִי יִשְׁלִי-כָּל וַיִּפְצַר-בּוֹ וַיִּקַּח:</p>

<p>Pesikta Zutarta on Bereshit 33:10</p>	<p>פסיקתא זוטרתא בראשית לג:</p>
<p>Which is like seeing the face of God: This can be compared to a person who is at a feast and his enemy is there, and it is in his mind to kill him. He says, 'This is like the dish I tasted yesterday at the palace'. His enemy says to himself, 'Because of this, he must clearly be close to the king. I need to leave him alone lest he go to the king'. Thus Yaakov said, 'Which is like seeing the face of God', to make known that an angel wrestled with him and he prevailed over him.</p>	<p>ע"א כראות פני אלקים: משל לאדם שהיה יושב בסעודה והיה אויבו שם, והיה בדעתו להורגו, אמר זה הטעם שאני טועם בסעודה זו טעמתי אתמול בבית המלך, אמר אויבו הואיל וזה קרוב למלכות, אניחנו שמה יבקשנו המלך, כך אמר יעקב אבינו, כראות פני אלקים, הודיעו שהמלאך נתאבק עמו ויוכל לו:</p>

<p>Shekol Tov on Bereshit 33:10</p>	<p>שכל טוב (בובר) בראשית לג:</p>
<p>Which is like seeing the face of God. This is like a person who sins and brings an offering to atone.</p>	<p>פני אלקים: כאדם החוטא מביא קרבן להתכפר, כך שלחתי לך מנחה להסביר פניך:</p>

So too I sent you a gift to cause your face to be kind.

Ibn Ezra on Bereshit 33:10

Which is like seeing the face of God: This is an angel. Most commentaries say the angel came to Yaakov in order to strengthen him so that he would not fear his brother Esav, for even the angel was not able to prevail over him, so all the more so a person.

אבן עזרא על בראשית לג:

כראת פני אלקים: מלאך. ורבי המפרשים אומרים כי בא המלאך ליעקב לחזק את לבו שלא יירא מאחיו, כי הנה המלאך לא יכול לו, אף כי בן אדם.

Kedushat Levi on Parshat Vayishlach p.133

I saw God face to face, and my soul was saved: There is a type of person who serves God so that God will shower him with good things when he serves Him. But there is a service much greater than this--when a person serves God because He is Great and the Ruler and he has no intention on receiving good. This type of service is called 'face to face' for a person serves God because He is Great and the Ruler. God, so to say, turns to him face to face. But the first type of service is called 'face to back', for God turns His face to him but he serves Him only to receive good things from Him. But 'for I saw God face to face' is the second type of service.

קדושת לוי על פרשת וישלח קלג

כי ראיתי אלקים פנים את פנים ותנצל נפשי: כי הנה יש אדם שעובד את הבורא ברוך הוא בעבור שישפיע עליו כל הטובות כשיעבוד אותו, ויש בחינה גדולה מזו, שאדם עובד את הבורא ברוך הוא בגין דאיהו רב ושליט, ואין כוונתו כלל על קבלת הטובה. והבחינה הזאת נקרא 'פנים בפנים' כי הוא עובד את הבורא ברוך הוא בגין דאיהו רב ושליט, והבורא ברוך הוא כביכול פונה אליו פנים בפנים. והבחינה הא' נקרא 'פנים באחור' כי הבורא ברוך הוא פונה אליו פנים, והוא כביכול עובד בכדי לקבל טובות מאתו. וזהו 'כי ראיתי אלקים פנים בפנים', זהו הבחינה הב'...

Rav Chanoch Waxman, *Parshat Vayishlach: 'And Yaakov was Left Alone'*

God sends the angel to prevent Yaakov from fleeing and to compel the confrontation between Yaakov and Esav. Why is this important to God? For the very same reason it has been important to Yaakov. God also knows that Yaakov needs to make up for his behavior of twenty years past, that he requires atonement and reconciliation. Yaakov is now injured; he cannot run. He has no choice but to face Esav. But there is more to God's action than mere support of Yaakov's original intentions. When God forces Yaakov to struggle with an angel, he thereby proves to him that he can meet almost any challenge. He teaches Yaakov that he can complete the struggle and face his brother (Ibn Ezra, Abarbanel). Even when causing Yaakov's temporary physical collapse, God in fact helps and bolsters Yaakov. He challenges him to find new existential resources, to complete the task and atone for his past...That very struggle with the angel constitutes a physical manifestation and metaphor of the numerous external and internal struggles that animate the character of Yaakov both before and after the nighttime wrestle. In the course of his attempt to be more than the Yaakov of tricks and wiles, he contends with the angel, with his clan-brother Lavan, with his flesh-and-blood brother Esav, with his fear, with the divine imperative of seeking atonement, and with his very own self and character. His renaming by the angel captures this past, present and future theme precisely. He will no longer be Yaakov, bent like the heel he once grasped, the one who garnered blessings by latching on to others, by the means of deals and tricks. He will no longer be known as the one Esav justly accused. Rather he will be Yisrael, he who has struggled in so many ways and proven able. He will be known as Yisrael, a man whose blessedness stems from his struggles.

