Twitter Thread by President-Elect SG



President-Elect SG
@GREENESJ333

Roger Froikin @rlefraim wrote;
"SHABBAT SHALOM

■■■. ■■■■
■■■■. ■■ ■■■■■

Parsha Vayishlach
Genesis 32:4–36:43

I hate to say it and many will object to my doing so, but reading the drama of this parsha it sounds sort of like a soap opera or a Latin American telenovela.
1)



Jacob, now very rich after being away in Haran for 20 years, returns back to the land of his father and grandfather with all his family and wealth. After all the years away, he is concerned how he will be received back in the region by his brother and his clan.
2)

So, he sends ahead hundreds of cattle and sheep to appease his brother and to avoid conflict.

But on the night before meeting Esau and confronting a possible problem, Jacob has an interesting experienced, one some call a dream, others call an actual event.
3)

Whatever it was, Jacob enters a struggle with a strong being (an angel?) and is victorious, and this being calls him Yisrael, as Jacob had struggled with the divine, and in the process hurts his hip. Now anyone who has ever had sciatica knows how bad that can hurt.
4)

But then, Jacob meets up with his brother, and they embrace, but decide that to part ways is for the best for them and all that they have.
5)

So Jacob moves on to Shechem and purchases a lot of land, but the Canaanite ruler of the city kidnaps and rapes Dina, Jacob's daughter, an act about which two of her brothers, Shimon and Levi would not tolerate,...
6)

and the penalty for this act of kidnapping and rape was the killing of all male residents of that city.
7)

Jacob continues on, and south of the then Jebusite city of Salem and a bit north of Beit Lechem, Rachel dies giving birth to their youngest son Benjamin, and the family buries her beside the road, and Jacob continues on to Hebron.
8)

There is a lot of content that needs attention in this parsha.

About Jacob's struggle. What does this mean? Well, to me, it means something special and unique in Judaism.
9)

You see, in all other religions at the time, and almost all today, man is a subject of the gods and their whims. Man is granted their grace or victimized by them, and so mankind prays and makes sacrifices, and looks for heroes and saviors to protect them.
10)

The people in all these religions must submit, implore, beg, be in fear. But Jacob's struggle meant that Yisrael was not a subject people. Yisrael was a people with the responsibility, individually & collectively to make its own fate, as well as any nation, can accomplish it.
11

That is a theological revolution that is still uniquely Jewish. Jacob struggled and became Yisrael and that is us.
12)

B. I know there are all sorts of interpretations of the Rape of Dina and the response of Shimon and Levi, arguments of whether they did the right thing, or whether they overreacted and sinned.
13)

I take the position that what Shechem did was done to enhance his leadership and therefore popular with his people and accepted as normative behavior.
14)

Therefore, the response of Shimon and Levi, was not only justified but was an act of preemptive defense for their people against a people whose values could not be tolerated as neighbors. Think about it.
15)

Today, we have rapes that occur, and then if there is ever an arrest, the rapist goes through courts for years and it is forgotten except by the victim and her family who never really get justice. Maybe Shimon and Levi had the right idea.
16)

C. And then there is the death of Rachel and her burial. The mother of Am Yisrael. I first saw the grave in June 1967. It was a small building, min bad condition, with garbage strewn around it, but people who didn't care or maybe didn't know the place's significance.
17)

It is in much better condition today, an honored place, with her descendants living near today in Gilo. Never to be left alone again."
18)

@threader_app compile